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Near East & South Asia

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International Affairs

Romanian Ambassador on Lifting of Embargo

93AE0296B Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 2 Dec 92 p 7

[Interview with Constantine (Stanka), the Romanian ambassador to Iraq, by Samir (al-'Azzawi); place and date not given]

[Text] Mr. Constantine (Stanka), Romania's ambassador in Baghdad, praised the relations evolving between Iraq and Romania, and the deep ties uniting the two countries. In an interview with ALIF BA' on Romania's national holiday on 1 December, he stressed that relations between the two countries will see rapid growth as soon as the circumstances of the blockade being experienced by Iraq have abated.

Regarding his return to Baghdad in late 1991 to engage in diplomatic activity following the end of the aggression against Iraq, the Romanian ambassador states:

[Stanka] I was the first ambassador to return to Baghdad to engage in diplomatic activity after the end of the aggression. The truth is that I returned fearful. My fears were based on the destruction that struck Baghdad and other Iraqi cities, as presented by Western television stations. However, upon arriving in Baghdad, I found life moving forward and the Iraqi people enjoying stronger confidence [in being able] to move beyond these circumstances. The large disparity between Western propaganda and the obvious reality of Baghdad and the Iraqis became clear to me.

[al-'Azzawi] What is your estimate of the reconstruction campaign, especially inasmuch as you are staying abreast of this campaign through your presence in Baghdad?

[Stanka] I have discussed this issue with numerous Iraqi ministers. We in Romania have a folk saying that, "Everything bad brings with it something good." The war is of course something bad. However, it brought something good with it, because it strengthened the Iraqi people's confidence in its ability to solve its problems by itself without calling upon foreign experts for help. Examples include the reconstruction of power and water stations and the repair of many projects. This proves that Iraq possesses experts in various fields, which is good for a country rich in energy such as Iraq. The world is now very cognizant of Iraq's great abilities to develop and advance in all fields.

[al-'Azzawi] Could you comment on the vicious conspiracies that American imperialism is undertaking to divide the unity of the Iraqi people and its national soil?

[Stanka] Romania is struggling on behalf of a unified Iraq and does not accept the partitioning of Iraq. We know better than others what partition means. We experienced such attempts in 1940, when Moldavia and Bukovina were appropriated from Romania, and also in 1939, when Hitler and Mussolini cut off a part of

Transylvania and gave it to Hungary. Therefore, we are struggling on behalf of the unity of the Iraqi territory and people.

[al-'Azzawi] What efforts are Romania making to break the blockade being imposed on the Iraqi people, who are linked by close bonds with the Romanian people?

[Stanka] For some time we have been struggling to break the blockade and lift it from Iraq. We dispatched the minister of state to the United Nations, and he asked for permission to import Iraqi oil and pay for it with food. We are making efforts in different directions to achieve this goal, even behind the scenes. However, no one in the Security Council is listening to what we are saying. Security Council members are the ones who decide, and we are not permanent members in this council.

[al-'Azzawi] How do you view the combative spirit of the Iraqi people in resisting the imperialist, American aggression?

[Stanka] I harbor special respect for the people who live between the Tigris and Euphrates. For more than 1,000 years, these people have been resisting, opposing, and repelling many foreign invasions and attacks launched by the Moguls, the Romans, and the Ottomans. This is true of people who have a long history. They cannot be eliminated, because that would mean the destruction of history.

(In referring to the American people), the Romanian ambassador states that there are many peoples who cannot understand other peoples. They have no nationality or roots. They gather together over time and form a people. They have no stability or roots in the homeland in which they live. This is what has made the Iraqi people pass through this phase and become stronger than before the war. The strength of the Iraqi people is in its roots, which extend into its land and homeland throughout history.

[al-'Azzawi] How do you evaluate the United Nations and the Security Council in the light of these Western positions?

[Stanka] I am not a diplomat by profession. I am a man who has worked in commerce and industry. This is the first time I have worked in the diplomatic corps. However, it seems that the League of Nations was more democratic than the United Nations is now. Some strange things are happening at the United Nations. Why do only five persons have the right to veto to decide the destiny and fate of others? To tell you the truth, their number is one. The others say and implement what it requests and says. The seizure of Iraqi funds is a dangerous precedent in international relations, because the owner of the funds has not been consulted regarding the fate of his funds.

[al-'Azzawi] Where is Romania going today following the Ceausescu phase?

[Stanka] First of all, the end of Ceausescu's rule represents a victory for the Romanian people's will after a struggle lasting many centuries to live freely on its land, establish constitutional institutions, and hold free elections to elect the president of the republic for four years. Four years is the legal time frame needed for making decisions aimed at: restructuring Romanian society on sound foundations based on respect for human rights and freedoms, including party plurality and freedom of religion; granting organizations and factories full freedom regarding management; giving priority to scientific inquiry; absorbing the most advanced technology; shifting from a centralized (socialist) economy to a market economy; and transferring ownership of production means from the state to the private sector.

[al-'Azzawi] What is the nature of Romania's foreign policy vis-a-vis the Arab countries?

[Stanka] Romania enjoys close, good relations with the Arab countries, not only in the political or diplomatic framework, but also in the industrial and economic field. Romania has a large industrial base, and our production [activities] require energy and oil, which the Arabs have abundantly. This means that we complement each other. We are also close technologically and economically, and we are able to provide industrial projects and advice to the Arab countries, which we do in many of them.

Alleged Condemnation of Embargo by Australian

93AF0369B Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
3 Feb 93 pp 20-21

[Article: "The Papal Bishop of the Syriac Orthodox Church in Australia: Blockading Iraq Is a Barbaric Act"]

[Text] Bishop Timthos Avram Abudi, the Papal Bishop of the Syriac Orthodox Church in Australia, called for lifting the unjust blockade imposed on the people of Iraq.

In an appeal directed to the international and Christian community, the bishop said that everybody should know the sufferings of the Iraqi people, in particular the children, as a result of the blockade. He added that reports indicate that about 150,000 children have died as a result of starvation or sickness since the blockade.

The bishop said that those who have imposed such decisions to starve people, kill children, and spread disease still have the audacity to claim they are peace loving and attempting to spread justice.

In conclusion, the bishop said, "As an example of the sublime expressions of mercy, we would like to quote the glorious Hadith: 'Have mercy on those on earth so that He who is in heaven would have mercy on you.' Everybody is requested to speak loudly so that our voices would reach those who have the authority to revoke the unjust decision of imposing an economic blockade on the people after the collapse of most of its symbols of culture and burning its wealth and stealing all its assets.

We should all cooperate to alleviate the suffering imposed by this unjust blockade."

Tunisian Official Asks For Removal of Embargo

93AE0296A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 2 Dec 92 p 6

[Interview with 'Abdelmajid El Sahraoui, the assistant secretary general of the Tunisian Labor Union, by Jawad Khalaf Salim; place and date not given]

[Text] Regarding the current Arab situation and the responsibilities of popular forces in confronting the new challenges facing the Arab world, ALIF BA' spoke with 'Abdelmajid El Sahraoui, the assistant secretary general of the Tunisian Labor Union, who visited Iraq recently as a representative of the Tunisian Committee To Repel the Aggression and Help Iraq. Mr. El Sahraoui initiated a discussion on the role that the Tunisian committee has played in repelling the aggression, saying: We have played an effective role in Tunisia. We organized cultural assemblies, marches, and demonstrations during the aggression against Iraq. We also played a distinguished role at the foreign level. We attended cultural seminars on behalf of the Tunisian Labor Union calling for the lifting of the blockade against the people of Iraq, and we clarified the dimensions of the conspiracy to which the Iraqi people are being subjected by the European countries. We were able to collect medicine and contributions and convey them to Iraq.

[Salim] How do you evaluate the Arab situation at present?

[El Sahraoui] A quick look at recent developments in the Arab world reveals extremely dangerous circumstances that are unprecedented in our contemporary history. These circumstances would not have developed in this way had it not been for the betrayals by some regimes and their attempts to use iron and fire to tame this nation's sons, extinguish the patriotic firebrand in them, and sow in them the seeds of humiliation and shame. This period has seen a succession of despicable conspiracies against Iraq. The 30-state aggression did not suffice for them. Rather, they began to devise pretexts for further intervention in Iraq's affairs. When that was not useful to them, they set out to divide Iraq into restricted areas in the north and south based on ethnicity and sectarianism. Last but not least, they acted like thieves and brigands with respect to Iraq, declaring their seizure of Iraqi funds deposited in international banks and institutions. Nonetheless, Iraq remains proud in its steadfastness, at a time when several Gulf countries have turned into American, British, and French protectorates.

[Salim] What duties do these circumstances impose on popular forces in the Arab world?

[El Sahraoui] Our duties in the light of these circumstances are many. We fully agree with the need to diversify the forms of aid for Arab causes and to resist different forms of aggression against the Arab people. An essential, pressing matter—which I believe is the basic

springboard for our activity—is the psychological war, which we must wage against our enemies. This requires us to publicize, over the widest scope possible, the miracles achieved by the Iraqi people despite the aggression and the blockade, and the acts of heroism performed by the sons of the intifadah daily and hourly.

[Salim] Are there specific foundations on which popular forces should base their activity at present?

[El Sahraoui] We must now focus on several pressing points. The first is to activate the struggle against imperialism in every Arab country. This is one of the foundations of our national action and a way to awaken the Arab masses to the basic national issues. We must also act to induce intellectuals to bear their responsibilities in confronting the reactionary, imperialist-Zionist invasion. In this regard, it is important to confront the cultural attack being waged by Gulf petrodollars to purchase the consciences of intellectuals in Egypt and the Arab Maghreb countries. We can do this by circulating correct information regarding events in Iraq, and by resisting campaigns intended to distort and awaken doubts.

Russian Stand Concerning Relations Analyzed

93AE0328A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Jan 93 p 4

[Article by Jalal al-Mashitah]

[Text] Moscow—The Iraqi situation has once again become the focus of attention in Moscow and a touchstone for its policy in the international arena. In the 1990 crisis, the Soviet Union frustrated Baghdad's hopes. It proclaimed that it shifted from confrontation with the United States to cooperation. The conservatives in the Soviet parliament exploited this step in the political struggle against the then-foreign minister Edward Shevernadze.

In the present crisis new disputes have broken out between the various political trends concerning determining Russia's role and position in international relations, and parliamentary groups have launched a large-scale campaign against the foreign ministry's current stands.

Deputy Gennadiy Sayenko, a leading Salvation Front member, which includes the hardline opposition, told AL-HAYAH that the "front will demand the resignation of Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev because his attitude toward events in Iraq has harmed Russia's interests" and could have involved it in a military struggle.

Parliamentary opposition leader Sergey Baburin, who visited Baghdad last month, stressed that he will demand the withdrawal of the Russian ships from the Gulf because they are "captives" there. He said that Baghdad might launch a "reasonable action" in response to the alliance forces that might endanger these ships.

It is recalled that the Russian fleet's press office announced last Friday that the ships Admiral

Vinogradov and Boris Botoma moved to the south-eastern part of the Gulf so that they will "sail in safe channels." The official Itar Tass press agency said the aim of this decision is to affirm that the Russian Navy will not take part in any military action against Iraq.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH confirming consensus of views on this matter, Konstantin Truyevtsev, a leader of the Democratic Choice who attended a meeting with Yeltsin last Thursday and who is an expert on Middle East and North African affairs, said the bloc to which he belongs supports Andrey Kozyrev's stand. The bloc believes that the Iraqi leader has "defied" the world community and was hoping to become a "hero" standing against the world community's will.

Despite the great differences in views, they can be classified into three main groups. The first, represented by the foreign minister and the radical group allied in the "Democratic Choice" believes that Russia's interest lies with the West, especially solidarity with the West in light of the clear acknowledgement of the end of the bipolar world. On the other hand, the "Russian Unity" bloc stresses that Russia must restore its role as a superpower and sees the United States as an "eternal adversary."

Alongside these two blocs there is a third one in the foreign ministry and in parliament that calls for pursuing a middle-of-the-road line, with the slogan "partnership does not mean alliance." Vitaliy Naumkin, dean of the Institute of Oriental Studies and a leading expert on the Middle East, said that Moscow should adopt a balanced stand, avoid being driven into the "quagmire" and toeing the Western line, because it has its own interests that differ from those of the United States. Also it should not lose what is left of its position in the Middle East and should become a bridge of dialogue with Baghdad and not its adversary.

It is recalled that Moscow has no ambassador in Baghdad since last spring, when [Viktor Bosovalic] was transferred to the capital in order to take the position of director general of Africa and Middle East affairs. Baghdad had refused the appointment of Oleg Derkovskiy, the present ambassador to the UAE (United Arab Emirates), in his place. In view of the absence of a "bridge," it has been decided to send [Igor Milikhov], deputy chairman of the Middle East Department, to Baghdad. A source close to the foreign ministry told AL-HAYAH that many objections have been raised regarding his visit in the present circumstances because Baghdad might interpret this as support for its stand and an attempt to placate it.

But the source in question affirmed that Moscow wants to send a clear message asking Iraq to comply with three provisions in particular concerning the question of the Kuwaiti prisoners, oil sales, and the compensation fund.

Diplomats who support the idea of dialogue with Baghdad affirmed that the domestic situation in Russia

does not allow ignoring the long-term economic relations between the two countries and the debts that are estimated at \$7 to \$8 billion. Baghdad hinted that it is ready to repay the debts if Russia will try to ease the sanctions. AL-HAYAH has learned from a reliable source close to the foreign ministry that Moscow's response was clear—that Baghdad "should withdraw the potential cards in Russia's hands instead of putting [in] new ones" in order to play such a role.

On the geopolitical front, there is almost a consensus among the supporters and opponents of dialogue, which is to refuse the partitioning of Iraq and to stress the need for a "counterbalance" to Iran, particularly in light of the possibility of Tehran acquiring weapons of total destruction. An adviser on Middle East affairs in the Russian parliament told AL-HAYAH that it is not unlikely that the recent strike [against Iraq] could lead to an Iraqi-Iranian rapprochement and a change in the attitudes of Turkey, Egypt, Bahrain and some other countries. He stressed that Russia cannot go on adopting a position fully supporting the West, "if the Iraqi president himself does not miss the opportunity this time as well." [sentence as published]

Deputy [?Aleksandr Drasukhov] member of the [former] CPSU politburo and former ambassador to Syria, confirmed this idea. He told AL-HAYAH that Russia must revise its calculations in order to find out the reason for Washington taking action "without paying heed to anything" and its resort to the use of force before exhausting the political and diplomatic means so that it will establish that it is the "only superpower" in the world.

[?Drasukhov] stressed that the [Russian] foreign ministry statement concerning the recent strike was drafted in more balanced terms than was the case in previous statements. It reflects the balance of power inside the government and parliament and takes the Russian public opinion into account.

International Military Intervention Recommended

93AE0353A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
29 Jan 93 p 8

[Commentary by Khalid al-Qashtini: "International Intervention Against the Regime Iraqis' Salvation From Saddam"]

[Text] One of my colleagues has an eloquent point of view regarding the Iraqi regime, which is, briefly, that we need a new word in our political dictionary: "Saddamism." It means starting out with an intelligent plan and coming out of it with a stupid result. All the Iraqi regime's maneuvers and operations were inspired and brilliant at first, but were quickly followed by stumbling and naivete.

The fact is that the regime has been just like this throughout every stage of its existence. In its earliest stage, it was marked by dazzling prosperity, and getting all national forces by its side, making Baghdad a center of influence to which everyone would come, and around

which intellectuals would swarm. Saddam seemed to many a pan-Arab hero on the scale of Salah-al-Din, one who would write a new golden chapter in the history of the Arab nation.

Thus the regime began, and look at the results of this course—it reminds us exactly of the course of the Nazi Party in Germany. The Nazi regime started out with an outstanding chapter in the 1930s; Germany flourished, Berlin became a brilliant center, and the intellectuals and leaders of the West flocked around Hitler. Money flowed into Germany from everywhere. Hitler quickly plunged his country into wars and his record turned black, and ended up with the stupid results that he got.

The secret here is that this kind of ruler begins his rule very much in touch with the thinking and genuine aspirations of his people, but after a few years in power they get isolated from the masses and are surrounded by a troop of flatterers, liars, and stupid opportunists. The media and opinion makers project an image as far as possible from reality, the "victorious leader" lives in a world of illusions that bears no relation to reality, and thus the regimes falls into a series of bad judgments. The first instance of this was his invasion of Iran. He imagined that al-Khumayni's revolution and the chaos that ensued, would split the armed forces' commands, and move the Arabs in al-Ahwaz to be freed of Tehran's grasp, would open the gates to him and make the Iranian regime submit to his will. The ignorance that pervaded Iraqi command centers blinded them to the historical truth that says: Beware of attacking a revolution in the prime of its eruption. This is a maxim of which the Europeans were aware in attacking Cromwell's revolution in England, the French Revolution in France, and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The Iraqi regime did not understand the importance of this maxim—had never even heard of it, of course. But the truth is that we cannot lay all the blame for this mistake on the regime. It was aided in it and led to it by global forces, chiefly Israel, with its misleading reports of the condition of Iran's forces.

The mistake for which the regime alone bears the responsibility is the notion that the Arabs of al-Ahwaz would give victory to Iraq's zealous forces. A dictatorship is like the gray-haired old woman who does not look in the mirror, and imagines, on her way to the party, that every handsome young man will fall in love with her. What the Iraqi regime needs is a mirror in which to see its face. But where will it get it, surrounded by all these imposters? In this way the regime has forgotten the atrocity it committed in expelling tens of thousands of Iraqi Shiites in the cruelest ways. If that is what it did to the Iraqi Shi'ah, what can the Iranian Shi'ah expect from it? And the way Saddam's military behaved in the cities they occupied did nothing to allay their fears. Instead of the Arabs of al-Ahwaz jumping up to help their Arab brothers from Iraq, they bore arms against them and fought them courageously and valiantly in al-Muhammarah [Khorramshahr] and other cities.

Has the regime learned the lesson? No. It went and made a miscalculation with its invasion of Kuwait, imagining that the global powers it had ridiculed in the past would be silent over his new adventure. In the flood of the Kuwait war he made another mistake that clearly exposed his naivete in understanding reality. After all that, he imagined that the Iranians would forget the disasters they had suffered for eight years and ally themselves with him on the question of Kuwait. He sent them more than 100 planes to store in a safe place, to be returned to him whenever he asked. Could anything be stupider than that?

Once again, no one has offered a mirror to the regime to see its face. The question now is, how to get rid of this regime?

The idea of a military coup was mooted but did not succeed. There are now 45,000 trained soldiers armed with the latest weapons guarding Saddam Husayn. They are led by officers, nearly all of whom are his relatives or followers. There are five intelligence agencies scattered everywhere. Even if a coup were to succeed, who could guarantee that it would not be by his followers or people like him? Putting the responsibility to do it on the sick, hungry, oppressed, hopeless people would be cruel and crazy; it is up to the international community itself to take up this responsibility. How can this be possible without military intervention?

First, [the international community] must have a clear and thorough understanding of the Iraqi regime; that this is not a matter for sanctions, fines, the destruction of weapons, or discovery of weapons. It is a matter of the regime itself. It has proved that it is a danger to the peace and security of the region, and the well-being of its peoples. It must go. This was said of Hitler's regime; why isn't it said of Iraq?

Second, that a way out be arranged for the men of this regime, and a refuge for them somewhere in the world. What is needed is not punishment or revenge, but a way out of this predicament and dead end.

Third, the international community should refuse to deal with this regime. This means freezing its membership in the United Nations, the Arab League, and all other international organizations. In an effort to mislead the Iraqi people and drug it with false hopes, a few weeks ago Iraqi authorities sent its envoy to America to confer secretly with Democratic Party leaders, Clinton among them, and obtained promises to cancel the sanctions and start a new chapter with Iraq. The regime must be deprived of any pretext such as this one: no negotiations and no consultations unless special, irresistible circumstances demand them. All doors must be slammed in the faces of the regime's envoys.

Fourth, it is the duty of the Iraqi opposition, if its opposition is sincere, to adopt the slogan Boycott the Iraqi Regime, and urge everyone not to cooperate with it, serve it, or work with it in so far as is possible.

Fifth, rescue the Iraqi people by bringing in food, medical supplies, and clothing, while preventing the regime from getting any supplies that would help it to stay in power.

This regime is in despair, and like any man in despair, it will be ready to engage in any adventure or atrocity. This must be prevented, by wiping it out of existence, and eliminating it with as little pain as possible.

There are those who say that the big countries are not convinced of this scenario, or do not want to trouble themselves with the problem of getting rid of this regime; or perhaps they hope to benefit from it for future reasons, such as standing up against Iranian aspirations, or benefiting from it in certain other areas. They say, "If the big countries wanted the people to rise up against it and topple it, or mobilize some officers and overthrow it, or assassinate its leader, then they must facilitate that by destroying the regime's supports: the intelligence centers and symbols of the regime's prestige such as the Swords of Victory [a gigantic statue]; not to hit an installation like the al-Za'faraniyah factory or the al-Rashid Hotel. Politics is in interests. While the interests of the great powers may be limited merely to declawing Saddam without overthrowing him, in the meantime it is not fair to inflict all these hardships and disasters on the Iraqi people; it is not fair or logical to seek to relieve the famine in Somalia or Bosnia, while causing a near-famine in Iraq. It is certainly not the way to secure the friendship of the people of Iraq, to enhance the reputation of the great powers, or to give credibility to the idea of the new world order.

Alleged Opinions in Favor of Iraq Outlined

93AF0370A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 20 Jan 93 p 13

[Article: "Arab and International Disapproval of the Aggression"]

[Text] Voices of disapproval are loud and feelings of anger and protest are exploding all over the world against the new crime of the coalition and their aggression against Iraq. Jordan denounced the new aggression against Iraq as Dr. Kamil 'Abu-Jabir, the Jordanian foreign minister, expressed his deep concern for the new aggression against Iraq. The Jordanian Parliament denounced the unjust American attack, as its speaker, Dr. 'Abdel Latif 'Uraibat said, that such an aggression is a challenge to the Arab nation at large hinting that the United Nations has become a means to implement the American schemes against the Arab and Islamic nation. The Jordanian prime minister, al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, said that the renewal of the military operations and the threat of using it in the future instead of resorting to dialogue may lead to the deep disappointment and anger that the Arabs experienced at the time when they witnessed the double standards regarding the enforcement of the Security Council resolutions.

In Khartoum, President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, denounced the aggression perpetrated by the forces of the coalition against Iraq and expressed his deep concern regarding this aggression that implies great danger to regional peace and security. He added that such an attack is a clear example of the double standards in enforcing the UN resolutions saying that it only serves the interests of the Western countries. General Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Uwaida, spokesman of the Sudanese armed forces, described the raid of the aggression as an act of cowardice.

In Yemen, an official spokesman of the government expressed his deep sorrow for the latest developments and the reuse of aggression against Iraq. He stressed the importance of settling the disputes peacefully and of maintaining the safety and unity of the land and people of Iraq.

The PLO condemned the new aggression against Iraq and said in a statement published by the Palestinian news agency that the organization is following with deep concern the aggression of the coalition forces against Iraq. The Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah) denounced the aggression against Iraq and its steadfast people confronting the blockade. In a statement issued in Tunisia, the organization said that this aggression clearly indicates the continuity of the policy of aggression of the Western coalition against Iraq and the sovereignty, freedom, and unity of its land.

Hamas affirmed that the resolutions of the United Nations are only enforced when they are in harmony with the interests of the Western countries. The Palestinian Liberation Front declared its absolute and effective support to Iraq represented in its people, land, and achievements and considered the latest aggression a direct aggression against the Islamic and Arab nation and all free and honest people in the world.

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood strongly denounced the raid against Iraq and described it as an indication of the Western hatred towards the Arabs. The spokesman of the Brotherhood, Mr. Ma'mun al-Hudaibi, in a statement to the French press agency described the attack against Iraq as shameful and unjust.

Dr. 'Isamat 'Abdel Majid, secretary General of the Arab League, confirmed that the air raid against Iraq is a threat to the unity of Iraq and the safety of its people, which the League is very keen to preserve. He added that if such an aggression was to enforce the resolutions of the Security Council, he wonders what these countries would do if the Zionist entity continues its refusal of Security Council Resolution 799 for the return of the Palestinians to their land.

In Algeria, the government informed the five permanent members of the Security Council of its deep concern regarding the beastly attack against Iraq. The Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the ambassadors of the five permanent member states in the Security Council one day before the attack and expressed its hope

that such alarming escalation be contained so that the situation would not be aggravated in the area.

The Russian Parliament has called for the withdrawal of Russian naval ships from the Arab Gulf as a protest to the air raids perpetrated by the United States and its allies against Iraq. Such ships were actually withdrawn, but a government spokesman claimed that the withdrawal was for routine maintenance and had nothing to do with the request from the Parliament. The Russian Parliament, upon the request of one of its members, has asked the foreign minister to explain the position of the government regarding the new air raid against Iraq. The same member has condemned the aggression against Iraq in a statement to the Parliament describing it as a unique precedent where a number of countries impose their will on a free country even as far as its movements within its own territories.

The British Labor member of Parliament, Mr. Tony Ben has denounced the new Western aggression against Iraq describing it as another example of the policy of guns practiced by a defeated president. On the other hand, the British Labor member of Parliament, Mr. Tom Dalal, has inquired about the reason for not enforcing the UN resolutions regarding the Zionist entity that did not abide by any one of them while the West is very keen to confront Iraq even without an international resolution.

Pakistan called for an emergency session of the Security Council to discuss the air raids against Iraq. The Pakistani Assistant Prime Minister in a statement before the Parliament, expressed his country's deep concern towards the new aggression towards Iraq.

Turkey denied that Incirlik base in the south of Turkey was put on alert. A spokeswoman for the Turkish Foreign Ministry said that no operation would be launched from Turkey against a neighboring country except in self-defense.

In Beijing, a spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry expressed his country's deep concern regarding the air raid on Iraq and called for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Gulf. He added that the resolutions of the Security Council should be seriously enforced and in an understanding manner, saying that the Chinese belief is that international conflicts should be settled peacefully.

In Tokyo, the police announced that representatives from Japanese peace organizations demonstrated protesting the air raid against Iraq.

In Nouakchott, the Mauritanian Government called for respecting the sovereignty of Iraq and the unity of its land. Official sources were quoted as saying that Mauritania hopes that international conflicts would be solved peacefully.

Malaysia denounced the new barbaric aggression perpetrated by the United States and its allies against Iraq. The Malaysian Foreign Minister said that the air raid

against Iraq by airplanes of the forces of the Western coalition will not achieve peace and stability in the Arabian Gulf area.

Likelihood of Reconciliation With Saddam Analyzed
93AE0350A Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
30 Dec 93 pp 18-21

[Article by Mansur 'Atiyah: "Is Coexistence With Saddam Husayn Possible?"]

[Text] Cairo—At first sight the question seems shocking. The deep wound that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait caused has not healed; it still pains the Arab body politic and poisons inter-Arab relations. Yet the question is being raised in more than one Arab and Western capital in the wake of many political changes in the months following the Gulf war. The question also is being raised in the wake of the anarchy that has swept Iraq's north and south, bringing this Arab country to the brink of partition into sectarian and ethnic ministates. Finally, the question is being raised because Arab ranks cannot remain disunited indefinitely. If Saddam remains in power, shall the Arabs stand by helplessly in the face of the suffering of 18 million people and the destruction of the infrastructure of an Arab country that was in the political, economic, and human vanguard? True, the wound of the Gulf war remains greater than all these questions, but approaching the wound is the beginning of the way to treatment.

Amid current international changes, as the international community continues to exercise its UN-approved powers to force Saddam Husayn's regime to implement the resolutions of legitimate international authority, the question that comes to mind is whether coexistence with Saddam Husayn's regime is possible amid all these changes.

Conditions in Iraq make it necessary to observe current developments in order to respond to this question. All the efforts to change Iraq's regime into a democratic one that can lead Baghdad out of isolation and restore its international clout have encountered problems, confronted obstacles, and succumbed to political, international, and regional balances. Attempting to answer the question, a number of politicians and diplomats spoke to AL-DUWALIYAH about the issue.

Former Egyptian Foreign Minister Isma'il Fahmi said:

"The Arab system has been subjected to powerful shocks in recent years, especially when the Iraqi regime ventured to invade Kuwait. The ensuing dangerous developments so loosened the system that it fell into a state of decline and anarchy. If we are to answer the question whether coexistence with the regime of Saddam Husayn is possible, the basic question lies in the Arab system itself: how it deals with its crises, and whether there is any strategy for Arab deterrence."

"The changes that have taken place in the balance of forces on the international and regional scene lead us to say first of all that partitioning Iraq under any condition or circumstance is unacceptable because it would open the region to an unimaginable inferno and would be a direct threat to Arab national security. Therefore, the international community's attempts to reshape arrangements and restore stability to the region require the preservation of Iraq's unity.

"This is point one. Next, we must make it clear that continued imposition of sanctions and an embargo on Iraq and inciting ethnic hatred between the Kurds and the Iraqi people will tend to make the Iraqi people cling to Saddam Husayn, which is to his advantage. Further sanctions therefore are not desirable. What is desirable is an attempt to end the tragedy of the Iraqi people and bring them into the mechanism of the Arab system. It will thereby be possible to affect the fallacy on which Saddam relies in order to survive: that Iraq is targeted by external enemies who want to divide and destroy it forever. This is likely to play a part in reducing Saddam Husayn's influence without interfering in Iraq's internal affairs or venturing to alter a political system by force, which would entail a violation of international norms."

"Thus I say that the possibility of coexistence is closely linked to the degree of influence on the Iraqi people themselves, to whose advantage it will be to replace Saddam Husayn."

"The Iraqi regime has confronted even more violent crises in the past, and it has been able to weather these painful conditions; which does not minimize the loathsomeness of the crime that Saddam Husayn himself has committed. What is needed is not approval of the presence of Saddam Husayn, but greater attraction of the Iraqi people toward the remainder of the Arab people. This will be the way in which the cards inside Iraq can be rearranged. As for external attempts to remove Saddam Husayn from power, not only have they been subject to failure, but they have also strengthened Saddam Husayn at home."

"We think the issue is not so much Saddam Husayn as it is Iraq. Iraq cannot be left out of any regional accounts or balances, given the shift in the balance of power in favor of Israel and other countries whose regional ambitions threaten Arab national security."

"Therefore, the subject of coexistence must be viewed in the context of an Arab deterrence strategy into which Iraq must enter. The continuance of Saddam Husayn's regime will depend on important developments, developments based on efforts by the Arab states to give the Iraqi people the feeling that they are not outside the region and that the cause of the tragic conditions they are suffering is President Saddam Husayn himself. Extending a helping hand to this people will be, as we have explained, a prelude to the collapse of this regime by itself without direct intervention."

"Coexistence is possible in one case: if Saddam Husayn retreats from his claims and ambitions. Naturally, this is impossible. However, if the Arab system holds together, it can force Saddam Husayn's regime to enter into a mechanism of Arab action. He then will have to adhere to it; if he violates it, it will cost him his regime, for it would be a violation of this consensus."

"What is required now is a call for an Arab summit. Saddam Husayn need not attend it. This is of course possible because the tasks incumbent on the Arab states and the challenges they face make it extremely important to discuss a united Arab strategy defining the position of the Arab system toward developments occurring on the international scene."

"I therefore repeat that the possibility of coexisting with Saddam Husayn's regime depends on the role of the Arab system and its effectiveness. An effective Arab system will not allow Saddam Husayn—if he manages to survive—to violate that system in any way, inasmuch as it will have mechanisms to control his action and to prevent outlaws from following their whims."

"It must be made clear that there are no alternative leaders at present capable of holding the reins of power in Iraq in light of current events there. This makes it probable that Saddam Husayn's regime will continue for the coming period. The coalition forces could have ended this regime, but there were calculations and balances that caused them to leave Saddam Husayn in power."

Coexistence With Him Impossible

Dr. Mufid Shihab, chairman of the Arab, Foreign, and National Security Affairs Committee of the Egyptian Consultative Council, said:

"Coexistence with Saddam Husayn is impossible, given the crime he committed. However, what concerns us is the Iraqi people and their interests. We are against any attempt to dismember Iraq. That would represent a violation of its national sovereignty and is something that no one will accept, based on international law, international norms, and the legitimate international authority itself."

"Coexistence thus is impossible given the existence of the same ideas, concepts, pretensions, and claims; for Saddam Husayn's regime proved beyond a doubt that it embarked on an adventure that led to a dangerous division in Arab ranks."

"Although we now are making exhausting efforts to restore cohesion to the Arab system, we need further efforts in this direction. The reality, as we see it, is that Iraq cannot be excluded from any calculations; however, the regime of Saddam Husayn himself can be excluded from the calculations, because there is a difference between the Iraqi people, who are being subjected to the international blockade, and the regime of Saddam Husayn."

"Given the regional security questions that the region now faces, it is important that Iraq regain its role and not be excluded from these calculations. We leave the task of changing the regime to the Iraqi people themselves. We have no interest in intervening to change this regime; the Iraqi people are capable of taking the appropriate position for themselves in this regard."

Experiences of History

Dr. Hasan Nafi'ah, an expert in international relations and professor of political science at Cairo University said:

"Let us look at the matter theoretically: Can heads of state and countries between which crises have occurred to the point of wars and armed confrontations work through their crisis, coexist, and agree on new rules?"

"The experiences of history say that it is possible. Even in the Arab world, this is not the first time that armed clashes have taken place between Arab states."

"It happened previously between Morocco and Algeria and between many other Arab states. It did not prevent holding summit meetings and working through the crisis."

"I do not think this means we have to minimize the enormity and loathsomeness of what happened in the Gulf crisis. It was the first time that an Arab state tried not merely to solve its problems by armed force, but also to swallow up a neighboring country and blot out its existence."

"The behavior of the various parties, not only Iraq, was characterized by the utmost emotion. This left very sharp residues that we must recognize will not be easy to overcome. Nevertheless, overcoming the crisis is not something impossible. We must consider briefly the reasons that invite, indeed dictate to the Arab world, that it make the greatest possible effort to overcome this crisis."

"First, I personally believe that boycotting Iraq as a state and a people increases the standing of Saddam Husayn. It does not weaken him, particularly as all the attempts by Western or international powers to change the regime have failed."

"Personally I think that if the Arab world and also the external world ended the boycott and began to work with Iraq as a people and deal with it on all levels, these dealings would probably lead to intensifying the Iraqi people's feelings against the loathsomeness of Saddam Husayn's actions. Unfortunately, the continued boycott has led to the belief that the issue is not Saddam Husayn, but Iraq. The impression has been generated among the Iraqi people that what is being demanded is the breakup of Iraq as a state, not merely changing the regime. This is indicated by the fact that the side that was fighting Iraq was not content with liberating Kuwait, but concentrated its main force on destroying Iraq's military forces

and even its economic structure. Then it tried to arouse sectarian hatred and rend Iraq as a state, but it did not try seriously to topple Saddam Husayn. It could have done so immediately upon the termination of military operations."

"Second, the survival of Saddam Husayn's regime is not the only cause of the Arab world's inability to overcome the crisis. This is shown by the fact that the Arab states that allied themselves against him and signed the Damascus declaration have not been able to move a single step in the direction of rebuilding the Arab system on new foundations."

"Saddam Husayn's survival should have been a motive and incentive for greater cohesion between the Arab states that stood against him."

"Third, if the Arab world must choose between boycotting Saddam Husayn and preserving Iraq's unity as a country, it must choose preserving Iraq's unity as a country; this without minimizing the feeling of bitterness or the psychological difficulty of dealing with such a person. The desire to preserve Iraq as a country must transcend all these wounds, pains, and psychological feelings. Continuation of the present situation and the possible partition of Iraq will open the Devil's door to the Arab world as a whole. The map of minorities in the entire Arab world is a time bomb that will explode if the attempts to divide Iraq succeed."

"I want to make clear that Saddam Husayn benefits from the continued worsening of Arab conditions. I conclude that the Arab world must ponder seriously the reality of the plots being woven against it. If it does so in the spirit of dedicated patriotism and nationalism, it will realize that the presence of Saddam Husayn at the head of the Iraqi regime must in no way impede the process of reordering the Arab household to confront these challenges."

"It is not impossible for the Arab world to find a way of dealing with Iraq as a people and as a state without this necessarily representing support for the regime of Saddam Husayn. For example, an Arab summit could be held without the attendance of Saddam Husayn to discuss all the challenges that confront the Arab nation, provided that the Arab states agreed on a unified position to demand that the international community follow a new policy toward Iraq, this being linked to Iraqi's realizing as much political participation as possible and a return of the Iraqi opposition forces to Iraq."

"The crises of the Arab system are much greater, older, and deeper than the existence of the Iraqi regime and more important than the existence of Saddam Husayn. My personal feeling is that some Arab parties, including Egypt, realize that the strategic dangers facing the Arab world are much greater than the problem of the survival of Saddam Husayn. I also think that some influential Arab parties, especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, are not ready to end this crisis now because of the depth of the wounds that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait left."

[Box, p 20]

Question of Democracy

Commenting on the jubilant demonstrations that took to the streets in Iraq after George Bush's defeat in the American presidential elections, a Western diplomat said: "Saddam Husayn is a dictator; so he cannot understand that leaders in democratic countries change periodically according to the needs, convictions, and choice of the people of those countries."

He added: "President Bush left office in Washington, as did Gorbachev before him in the Kremlin, and Margaret Thatcher in London. This happened not because of Saddam Husayn, but in response to genuine traditions of democracy and respect for the decision of the people."

These words are incomprehensible to Saddam Husayn, who has not and never will become mature enough for democracy.

[Box, pp 20-21]

Mehdi Allalou: 'Saddam Husayn Has 4 More Years'

Algiers—In Algeria, the Gulf war created a great difference between official and popular positions and between the information media and the government. It also caused a disparity between the positions of different political parties.

The Popular Association for Unity and Action (APUA), headed by Mehdi Abbas Allalou, was one of the few parties that enunciated a clear position condemning the regime of Saddam Husayn.

Allalou was led to follow every major and minor point related to the Saddam's personality, which he observed in accordance with his own vision. AL-DUWALIYAH interviewed him:

[AL-DUWALIYAH] Why was your political association quick to take a position on Iraq's interference in Kuwait, even before there was an official Algerian Government position?

[Allalou] One must go back to 1990, when the Algerian state, headed by Chadli Bendjedid, allowed political parties freedom of initiative to take international positions apart from the official position. Some positions were in agreement with the official position; others turned out to be in disagreement with it.

For me, the so-called invasion was an occupation. We met with the Kuwaiti ambassador as well as the former Iraqi ambassador to Algeria and communicated our official and principled position. We said that if Kuwait had occupied Iraq, we would have stood on the side of Iraq.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] How do you think the Iraqi problem should be resolved under the present circumstances?

[Allalou] It really has become a difficult problem. The Iraqi regime was bloody and dictatorial both during the lead-up to the overthrow of former President Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr and in declaring war against Iran and not recognizing the 1975 Algiers agreement drawing the boundaries between the two countries. When the war ended in 1988, the Iraqi Army emerged with 1 million soldiers. Saddam naturally thought that if he did not give the army privileges, it would revolt against him. He had come out of the war bankrupt. Since the regime was composed of a ruling minority (800,000 Iraqis have privileges, compared with 18 million who lack them), he had to devise something to distract the army. He had the choice of Palestine or embarking on a war with Saudi Arabia or Turkey. He chose the richest and easiest—the state of Kuwait.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] Can the Iraqi Army remove Saddam from power?

[Allalou] I don't think so. I don't think it will occur in coming days.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] Why?

[Allalou] What has further aggravated the situation is that the Iraqi people have rallied round Saddam Husayn because of the blockade. The people have come to believe that those imposing the blockade on them are the enemies. As long as the Kurds are calling for secession, not autonomy, the lifespan of Saddam Husayn's regime will extend another four or five years.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] And the solution?

[Allalou] The solution, frankly, is for Saddam Husayn to go, on the ground that the surrender declaration signed with the United Nations contains as one of its points for raising the blockade the condition that Saddam Husayn depart.

America knows well that Saddam will not depart. I remember what Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr said: "I came by the gun, and shall go by the gun." In other words, the resignation of Saddam is impossible. His guards come from his family. The sectarian conflicts will not have an influence in the near future, but they may have an influence in the long run.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] How will the process take place?

[Allalou] The deterioration of the condition of the Iraqi people and the deterioration of conditions in the Iraqi Army have guaranteed that Saddam will remain in power.

I think that opening toward Iraq or lifting the state of siege will enable the Iraqi people to recover their strength and overthrow the current regime.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] Where is the opposition?

[Allalou] The opposition is located outside the country. It is impossible for it to be effective inside the country.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] What mental picture did you have of President Saddam Husayn before the war and after the war?

[Allalou] Saddam Husayn is a stubborn man. He is not influenced by the opinions of others, as shown by the fact that he celebrated his birthday after the Gulf war. Is that normal, I ask you? When one's neighbor dies, one does not hold a party or a wedding.

After the war, one could see that Saddam had gained 20 kilos of weight. In other words, he is a man who is not affected emotionally. Saddam was the same before assuming power and after assuming it, before the Iraqi war and after it, before invading Kuwait and after it.

[AL-DUWALIYAH] Some see a pressing need for military action to remove him.

[Allalou] What I hope is that Saddam will be removed by the Iraqi people. The Iraqi people are a great people. They are trying to rebuild what the war destroyed. Saddam is the headache that is paining the Arabs' head; he is the sickness in the Arab body. Why have they not uprooted him?

[AL-DUWALIYAH] Do you mean that Saddam's survival in power has been to preserve the interests of certain people?

[Allalou] I think Saddam Husayn has a role that he must complete and that he therefore will not be removed in less than four years!

Internal Affairs

Opposition Gathering on Unity, Saddam Overthrow

93AE0351A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
5 Jan 93 p 4

[Unattributed article: "Iraqi Opposition Abroad Calls For Formation of Political and Philosophical Line To Maintain Country's Unity and Sovereignty"]

[Text] A large group of Iraqis opposed to the regime of Saddam Husayn, made up of members of various political and philosophical movements, held an extended meeting in Britain on the evening of 2 January, in which they studied issues related to the Iraqi cause in all its aspects, its current circumstances, and the national principles they are committed to in their struggle for a sovereign, free, just, and unified Iraq. They agreed to formulate a political and philosophical line suited to this stage in the history of Iraq and its people in an extended meeting they decided to convoke within the next few weeks.

They sensed the need for a response to the questions of Iraqi generations, being asked out of great fear and apprehension: Will Iraq remain one country? What is the democracy Iraq needs? Or the change in law? What is the

way to bring down the dictatorial regime, or to eliminate its destructive effects on Iraq and the countries of the region? In this first consultative meeting, the clear need emerged for a political, patriotic, cultural, Iraqi plan to restore confidence to every single Iraqi, his people, his homeland, and his political opposition.

The participants emphasized the need not to lose sight of their basic objective, which was to bring down the present regime, which had brought disasters upon Iraq, and on the Iraqi, Arab, and Muslim masses. They reaffirmed their adherence to the sovereignty of Iraq, its safety, and national unity, and to lift the fraud, damage, and injustice from the backs of the people of Iraq, who had borne tragedies and catastrophes since the coup of July 17, 1968 through the present, especially since Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990, due to the ruling regime's control over the country, and the imposition of the economic blockade, whose continuation the international community has reaffirmed for as long as this regime lasts. The participants urged the international community and its humanitarian institutions to see that food, medicine, and civilian aid reached all regions of Iraq and its population centers, without dealing with the dictatorial regime in Baghdad or normalizing diplomatic or political relations with it, and to end immediately and stop the spread of famine, diseases, and plagues in Iraq's cities. The participants asserted their rejection of the racial, sectarian, and confessional bases during their embarking upon the formulation of solutions to the current Iraqi crisis, and urged others to follow their example, and to reach a general national understanding or agreement along these general lines or principles. They elected a committee among themselves, and directed it to issue invitations to a "consultative, mediating, extended meeting" to be attended by opposition parties, organizations, and individuals from various circles abroad and at home.

They left to the coming extended meeting the question of studying the possibility of holding a public, unified conference of the Iraqi opposition to undertake, in its turn, the advancement of a general national plan, and to detail its features and its extent. They observed the need for the existence of a supreme political and service leadership, qualified and unified, to come out of the Iraqi opposition's future conference, in which all Iraqi forces, whatever their political directions, intellectual or political tenets, will take part. The participants appealed to the International Security Council to implement its sole resolution relating to human rights in Iraq, Resolution 688, and called for making Iraq one secure region, from its north to its south, and from its east to its west. They asked the international community to seek a new method of implementing the blockade imposed on Iraq in such a way as to hurt the regime without bringing harm to the Iraqi people. The Iraqi people are not responsible for this regime's deeds and positions that threaten Iraq's sovereignty over its territory, resources, and independent authority.

Opposition Urged To Base Itself In Northern Iraq

93AE0330A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Jan 93 p 13

[Article by Kamran Qurah Daghi: "Iraqi Opposition and Exile Mentality"]

[Text] The Western allies' air strike at Iraq has dominated the atmosphere of the meeting held in London last week by the Executive Council of the opposition National Iraqi Conference. The conference projects itself as the possible alternative for Baghdad's dictatorial regime and is eager to be treated on this basis locally, regionally, and internationally. So far, the conference has been unable to show practical evidence that it has convinced the Iraqis, let alone others, that it measures up to this ambition.

It can be said that the conference had opportunities to realize this ambition immediately following its emergence in Vienna last June. Two important factors played a basic role in attracting attention to it. The first was domestic, which was represented by the Iraqi Kurdish movement joining the conference. This gave the conference a major boost, thanks to the movement's political weight. The movement's legality became unquestionable following the free and democratic elections held in Iraqi Kurdistan. The elections have resulted in the establishment of a parliament and a government. This is in addition to the military weight of the movement, which is in control of 75 percent of Iraqi Kurdistan. Iraqi Kurdistan is inhabited by 4 million people, which makes it a real base for confronting the Iraqi regime.

The second fact is represented in the recognition it gained from the major Western powers, particularly the United States, which received at the highest level (the secretary of state, the president's national security adviser, congressional leaders and others) a delegation representing the conference less than two months after it was established. These two factors were critical in holding the second convention at home (in Salah-al-din) for the first time last October. The group was joined by Islamic parties that had boycotted the Vienna conference. The conference, specifically its executive council—which is responsible for implementing its policies, was expected to begin actual fieldwork. But this has not happened, thus leading to questions about the conference's effectiveness.

Instead of the conference leadership taking the required first step, which is to move to Kurdistan and to use it as a principal base of action, it once again return to devoting most of its efforts and time to dialogue with the rest of the opposition parties: those that boycotted Salah-al-Din conference or those that adopted a reserved attitude toward its results. These are the pro-Syrian nationalist parties and the pro-Tehran Islamist parties. In fact, this was the biggest mistake the conference could have made, because experience has shown that parties to such dialogue will get involved in interminable wrangling. The belief that it is possible to unite all sides of the

opposition, most of which are marginal, is only an illusion, or at best a desire that reflects a kind of idealism that has no place in political reality.

The illusion also reflects what can be termed as the "exile mentality" of the Iraqi oppositionists, most of whom have spent two decades abroad, far away from Iraq and its realities. Perhaps one of the encouraging aspects of Salah-al-Din's meeting lies in the decision to make Kurdistan the base of Iraqi opposition, which may augur the beginning of the end of the exile mentality.

Hence, moving the opposition to Kurdistan does not only reflect a belief in the Kurds' Iraqi character, but also the desire to keep them so through practical action for the sake of a united Iraq. Certainly there is no better place than Iraqi Kurdistan to listen to the real heartbeat of Baghdad and the rest of Iraq. It will not be a distorted and garbled heartbeat that prevents making a correct diagnosis of the nature of the illness and makes determining the treatment even more erroneous. Kurdistan is nearer to Baghdad than London, and even nearer than Damascus and Tehran. Most probably if real opposition work begins in Kurdistan, thousands of frustrated Iraqis in Syria and Iran will join this work despite its leadership.

Plight of Kurds, Living Conditions Described

93AE0361A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
3 Feb 93 pp 7-11

[Article by Hayfa' Zanganah: "Kurds Confront Regime of Two Blockades"]

[Text] As winter approached and people increasingly feared that this year's would be severe, a group of Kurdish women went to the street leading to the Kurdish parliament in the city of Irbil. Instead of talking to the elected deputies, they began cutting the trees lining the road. Only after two hours did anyone intervene to stop them. Now, as we experience the fourth month of a stormy winter that may continue for several more months in Kurdistan, far away from the coalitions, negotiations, and the game of promises by several parties simultaneously, how, one wonders, are the Kurds of Iraqi Kurdistan living, and how is the ordinary individual facing the regime of two blockades?

A Britain-resident Kurd just returned to London from a family visit in the city of Dahuk in Iraqi Kurdistan said that the members of his family—five brothers, their wives and children, and his mother—had all gathered when he arrived and decided to treat him to his favorite food, dolma. That was the only dish they sat down to, unlike the ordinary custom of offering several courses, especially because he was returning to visit them for the first time in 10 years. He learned after dinner that the meal, whose expense everyone had shared, had cost 1,000 Iraqi dinars. If we consider that his brother, a high-school teacher in Irbil, had drawn his 200-dinar salary for the first time in six months and that two of his brothers were unemployed, we see the true value of the meal.

We do not intend to talk about the political situation of Kurdistan now. What is really important, rather than the political identity, is the condition of people who have fought for dozens of years for a better human and economic situation—one where the simplest human rights are available and where they can breathe with the freedom that they have long lacked. The first and last step in this regard may be to achieve economic independence. Is what is happening now in Iraqi Kurdistan a sign that this is being realized, if only for the future?

What local Kurdish authorities rely on to obtain the revenues that will help them provide basic health, education, and other services is limited to the system they have implemented of imposing a tax on trucks loaded with goods passing through their territory. This seems to be the only announced revenue source, in addition to UN aid, which comes intermittently and is subject to a bureaucratic system that relies heavily on deductions by the Iraqi regime. True, 30 nations contributed to the aid campaign for Kurdish refugees, and at the height of aid contributions in March 1991, airplanes of 13 countries participated in aid transport missions. Now, however, the situation has changed, and with the change has come real need. Schools remain open and classes packed with pupils thanks to the enthusiasm and energy of teachers who volunteer their time and effort for meager salaries. Sometimes they do not get their salary for more than three months. There are few books, fewer notebooks, and paper is very scarce. True, most goods are available in the black market, but their exorbitant price rules out their purchase, because most people devote all their effort to obtaining the basics.

This as regards the schools; hospitals, too, are suffering from shortages of medicine, basic materials, doctors, and nurses. Doctors, when present, usually are forced to use their offices as clinics and examining rooms, despite their conviction that this is useless; for what use is it to diagnose a disease if the medicine is unavailable?

There are long lines of patients—women, children, and the aged—in hospital lobbies and in front of doctors' offices and clinics. Cases of malnutrition and childhood diseases are increasing because the necessary immunization doses are not being obtained.

As for food, many people returned to planting last year, and last year's harvest was relatively good. However, the increasing shortage of seeds, fertilizer, and money to purchase primary materials may prevent a repetition of that, particularly with the coming of winter, when Kurdistan becomes an almost isolated area in which the inhabitants make do with waiting to greet the coming spring. Care about obtaining and storing fuel has become a real anxiety that has taken a heavy toll on the dense forests. People have vied with each other in cutting trees and storing wood. Perhaps what Kurdish women in Irbil

did last November when they demonstrated in front of the Kurdish parliament and cut down the trees of the street leading to the parliament was the best illustration of the great anxiety these women felt out of concern and care for their children's lives in the face of expected severe cold, health dangers, and malnutrition.

In addition to creating heating problems, the fuel shortage hampers transportation, which is the necessary artery for supplying the entire region with life. As the most recent report of the Swiss relief agency that has concentrated its aid on the area of rebuilding says: "The movement of rebuilding that we began in summer 1992 halted completely in November 1992 due to the cutting of transportation roads between Kurdistan and Turkey and the difficulty of obtaining gasoline."

Obtaining gasoline—after one is sure that it is not adulterated or mixed with water—requires paying a tremendous sum of Iraqi dinars (after one has ascertained that the dinars themselves are genuine and not counterfeit). The exchange rate of 1 pound sterling on the black market is 45 Iraqi dinars, and the value of the dinar is expected to decrease more and more as a result of the continuing economic blockade.

The condition of Iraqis in the central and southern part of the country is not much better than in Kurdistan, particularly regarding the shortage of medicines, bad hospital services, and high prices. All are being forced to sell their most valuable possessions in order to obtain necessities.

In a report that she prepared commenting on the blowing up of a number of UN trucks carrying food from Turkey, Anne Marie (Buff), the director of the Swiss relief agency, said: "The only way to transport relief supplies is trucks. If these operations aim at cutting off this way, we have found no alternative route to date. This necessarily means not bringing basic supplies to the Kurds, not just in winter. We urgently need to find an alternative."

This urgent need for an alternative applies to all aspects of life in Kurdistan now and in the future. Most people no longer have anything to sell to provide for their own lives and for their families. Unemployment is becoming ever more serious, and price increases have no limit. What was available until recently has become a rare coin, which later sometimes turns out to have been only a counterfeit coin.

Lifting of Sunken Ships Discussed at Meeting

93AF0369A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
20 Jan 93 pp 20-21

[Article: "Iraq's New Achievement in Lifting Sunken Ships"]

[Text] Iraqi researchers at the Faculty of Science at Al-Basra University have realized a new scientific achievement for the general authority for Iraqi ports in the field of lifting the sunken ships. This is considered a

first of its kind in the world. The dean of the faculty, Dr. Kurkis 'Abd Al-'Adam said in an exclusive statement to ALIF BA': "Due to the 30-country aggression, many ships and boats have been sunk affecting our maritime navigation. With the objective of lifting these sunken ships from our territorial waters a scientific team was able to manufacture a plastic float with the dimensions of 2.5 meters by 1.5 meters, which was field tested and proved successful."

He added: "The General Authority of Iraqi Ports has notified us of the success of the experiment. This scientific achievement would open wide the doors to manufacture many of the articles that we had imported, such as life jackets, and other life-saving devices and rubber boats." He added that after the success of this experience, attempts will be made to produce a large number of these floats that would contribute to lifting sunken ships and the remains of the 30-country aggression against our dear Iraq and it will have a positive affect on maritime navigation.

He also added that the patent of this invention would be used to produce erosion-resistant material for the refrigeration systems to replace those materials that we used to import from foreign companies. He added that the joint team that included scientists from al-Basra University and the general authority of Petro Chemical Industries was approved by General Hussein Kamil Hasan, advisor to President Saddam Husayn, may God keep him.

This is the first time that Iraq had had such an experiment, as the Iraqis stress their continuous creative actions to break the unjust blockade of their beloved country.

Nuri Faysal Shahir of Command Council Interviewed

93AE0372A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 27 Jan 93 pp 8, 9

[Interview with Nuri Faysal Shahir, member of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council and secretary general of the Central Students and Youth Bureau, by Shamil 'Abd-al-Qadir; place and date not given]

[Text] In the immortal Mother of Battles, the sons of Iraq went the gamut in defending the independence of their country, the unity of their motherland, and their independent decisionmaking [sovereignty]. All factions of the Iraqi people have spared no contribution or sacrifice in order to further their cause in face of the oppressive tripartite assault. They rose to the expectations of their leaders and their nations when they rejuvenated Iraq in the aftermath of the assault. They reconstructed all the facilities destroyed by the enemies and were indeed a people for difficult tasks.

As the Iraqi people hastened to serve their country, students and young people played a distinctive role in this victorious course and left a clear imprint as an

embodiment of their determination and their ability to persevere in their struggle for a strong and able Iraq.

Comrade Nuri Faysal Shahir, member of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council and secretary general of the Central Students and Youth Bureau [of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party], gave ALIF BA' an expansive interview in which he discussed all subjects of interest to the youth and student movement, and especially to the role of young people in the immortal Mother of Battles. "He said: It is possible to measure the harm inflicted upon the youth and student sector by the number of children killed by the aggressors, the number of schools they destroyed, and the institutions and installations serving youths and students that were demolished with thousands of tons of bombs and missiles even though they were civilian installations. In addition to bombed residential buildings and hospitals, added injury was inflicted by the chapter of treachery and betrayal—a chapter that underlined the destructive American, Atlantic, and Zionist roles.

The comrade secretary general of the Central Students and Youth Bureau added: The [devastation brought about by the] oppressive economic embargo has been documented in various reports by international agencies and organizations that visited the country, including the United Nations, countless doctors, reports by Harvard University, and other relief agencies.

As a slice of the Iraqi people, students and youths confronted the assault with the hardships they endured and with their determination to persevere in their quest for education, knowledge, moral equilibrium in the mobilization effort, social responsibility, rationalization, and adjustment to the struggle as dictated by steadfastness.

[Abd-al-Qadir] What action has the Youth Federation taken with regard to the "confrontation division"?

[Shahir] The leader, President Saddam Husayn, May God Keep Him, inaugurated the "confrontation division" at the time he received the Executive Bureau of the General Iraqi Youth Federation this past 15 January. Since then, that division has become a patriotic task for all of our steadfast people as they engage in successive battles. It must be emphasized at this point that the division has performed a lot of patriotic, economic, and moral assignments. It has restrained the phenomenon of excess and consumption and has begun many large-scale crusades such as the drive to collect wastepaper. Drives by young people have so far netted more than 20,000 tons valued at 19 million dinars, according to estimates of the Ministry of Industry. We should not forget to mention the important drives to collect glass and to establish productive works for the manufacture of sports and youthful garb to be sold at prices lower than is currently available in the marketplace.

[Abd-al-Qadir] The Mother of Battles has brought forth many educational facts and results that serve the interests of the Arab nation and its glorious struggle. Are any

proposals or amendments planned for school curricula after the Mother of Battles stage is over?

[Shahir] It is common knowledge, and natural, that school curricula are borne of planned educational policies. As to the Mother of Battles, it is constant and not a stage as you indicated by your question. Rather, it is a perpetual state of cultural revival [renaissance]. Only the means change from one stage to another, as stated by leader President Saddam Husayn, May God Keep Him. The formulation of curricula is governed by two factors—patriotic, educational, and moral precepts and educational developments and changes in lifestyle. It is certain that the curricula will undergo changes.

[Abd-al-Qadir] For instance?

[Shahir] For instance, to economic conditions and living sources we must add a third channel—the Saddam channel as a positive economic variable for study. The same holds true for scientific innovation in the fields of industrialization, agriculture, services, and education. Such changes are successive.

[Abd-al-Qadir] Are there obstacles that obstruct the course of the student and youth movement?

[Shahir] Yes, there are operational restraints on the course of students and youths. The requisites of youth and educational activities are restrained by the embargo imposed on our valiant country. If we must go into detail then we can point out the requirements for activities related to scientific, athletic, and cultural youthful hobbies; the requisites of schools, institutions, and universities; and matters related to documentation, laboratories, means of transportation, and books. We must, in the face of such challenges, look inward to discover what innate means we have for surmounting obstacles. In other words, we must return to what leader President Saddam Husayn, May God Keep Him, described as the reserves imbedded in the conscience of the people. I must at this juncture point out numerous youthful innovations that helped facilitate such activities within the framework of economic and [social] responsibility. No specific figures come to mind immediately but there are plenty of scientific, cultural, and technical innovations that closed the tremendous gap in [the shortage of] student and youthful requisites.

[Abd-al-Qadir] Anything new in the Arab and international relations of students and youths?

[Shahir] The students and youths of Iraq were able to accomplish a lot under the plan devised by the Students and Youth Bureau. Examples are the conclusions of the Students and Youths Conference of the Nonalignment Movement, which resolved to hold its next meeting in Baghdad sometime this year. That is a major regional and international victory for the students and youths of Iraq.

The students of Iraq have also regained membership in the Asian Students Association headquartered in the

Indian capital of Delhi. The youths of that association and of the nonaligned movement have issued resolutions and directives denouncing the embargo, condemning the American conspiracy, and affirming the unity of Iraqi people and soil as well as the principle of political choice as embodied in the policies of the victorious leader Saddam Husayn, May God Keep Him.

Student and youth meetings [were held,] and working agreements were concluded with a number of national, regional, and international organizations. I underscore the accomplishments of the above-mentioned conference on Arab youth solidarity held in Baghdad in mid-October of last year and attended by 40 Arab youth organizations. They also engage in joint activities with the youths of the Arab Maghrib and with student and youth organizations in Europe and Latin America. All [such contacts] serve the Iraqi struggle in the face of the imperialist and Zionist challenges.

The comrade member of the Iraq National Command discussed the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency and the scope of action that youth and student agencies must take in order to contain that negative phenomenon. He said: We must first identify the type of dereliction and the threat it poses to society. I believe that there are traditional derelictions common to all societies and induced by day-to-day activities. There also derelictions induced by the state of emergency. Those were discussed by the leader and president, May God Keep Him, in his talk with members of Baghdad branches on 23 November 1992 when he alluded to the problems of auto theft and of temptation and delinquency. At any rate, it is no secret that delinquency has risen as a result of several factors but its [incidence here] is minimal compared to Western societies. Numerous plans and programs to restrain that phenomenon are now in place.

[Abd-al-Qadir] What programs do you have in place for that purpose?

[Shahir] The Central Students and Youth Bureau, the General Iraqi Youth Federation, and the Teachers Syndicate all have intensive programs to fight delinquency. We, by virtue of our specialty [position], focus primarily on preventive measures that immunize youths against dereliction. Specifically, we have in place student and youth programs and activities to attract youths. Among them are youth organizations for voluntary service, youth associations, activity centers, and a youth workshop concerned with preventing delinquency. We are in contact with relevant ministries and institutions and we also have a plan to monitor the incidence of the delinquency phenomena. There exist also educational and cultural activities that range from slogans, communiquees, and meetings to lectures, seminars, and study groups.

[Abd-al-Qadir] What measures do you have to absorb youthful energies?

[Shahir] There is a wise saying to the effect that nature abhors emptiness [vacuum] that, if in the form of unemployment, is one of the causes of delinquency. It is a fundamental of virtue to satisfy basic needs and this is why the matter of jobs is a pressing fundamental issue. But the country suffers under an oppressive embargo that has undermined numerous developmental endeavors and largely frustrated the effort to expand employment opportunities. And yet, without prejudice [to the policy of] economic and social responsibility, the valiant leader President Saddam Husayn has ordered the creation of job opportunities for youths. A supreme commission was formed under comrade 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, a member of the Central students and Youth Bureau and chairman of the Iraqi National Olympic Committee. The commission has shouldered responsibility for creating opportunities for youths unencumbered by red tape or by traditional administrative restrictions. I can say with total accuracy that in only two months we have been able to create 6,585 jobs for youths in all fields thanks to the work of this commission, which opened youth employment bureaus throughout the governorates and is in daily contact with various institutions and ministries that can absorb [unemployed] young people. Such institutions include the Ministries of Industry, Agriculture and Irrigation, Housing and Reconstruction, Military Industrialization, and other ministries. I can assure you that the number of job opportunities provided is dynamic and bodes well. Comrade 'Udayy Saddam Husayn played a distinguished role in that regard.

The comrade member of the Iraq Revolutionary Command Council and secretary general of the Central Students and Youth Bureau went on to discuss the experiment of the Vanguard and its future: The Vanguard experiment is on-going and has been subject to developments, such as changing the Vanguard vision within a framework that would flesh out the reality elucidated by the comrade valiant leader Saddam Husayn, May God Keep Him, when he told the Vanguardists that "any leader who does not consider you his precious asset and his solid stock for the future lacks a clear vision in life."

A special Vanguard office has been created as part of the Executive Bureau of the General Federation of Iraqi Youths. There are also special constituent links that include Vanguard committees. Some 378 such committees throughout the country are concerned with offering cultural, technical, and mobilization activities. The Vanguardists also maintain a leader in every primary school.

Membership in the Vanguard organization is voluntary, and this experiment is now evolving along new operational lines that we hope will be allowed ample opportunity to serve upcoming [future] generations. I tell you that the performance of the Vanguard organization is still below targeted standards but we are working for better results.

[Abd-al-Qadir] To what extent do you intervene to resolve the problem of young people shunning marriage?

[Shahir] To answer that question we must first identify the reasons for rejecting the institution of marriage. Those are primarily social and economic reasons and the consequence of youth outlook imbalances created by educational and informational influences that fail to consider the value and moral aspects of society. As far as the Central Students and Youth Bureau is concerned, the Youth Federation undertakes activities designed to encourage marriages by young people. These include throwing no-cost parties for newlyweds and hosting them at first-class hotels at Federation expense as part of its social cooperation [program] with other organizations. The Federation also does all it can to help young people acquire bedrooms and furniture at reasonable cost. We set about founding a woodworking shop to manufacture furniture for youths but the Ministry of Trade would not supply us needed wood. We continue to seek substitutes, though. Producing youth workshops have also been directed to produce reasonably priced wedding gowns and to open low-cost suit-rental facilities.

Long Stay of Sa'd al-Bazzaz in Jordan Explained

93AE0360A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
3 Feb 93 pp 30-31

[Text] London—The story began simply like a rumor. Just over four months ago it was reported in journalistic and political circles in Amman that Sa'd al-Bazzaz, chief editor of the Iraqi newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH, might stay for a long time in Amman, and that he does not intend to return to his country in the foreseeable future because of fear for his life and of being liquidated the same as those who are being liquidated there on various charges.

Numerous questions have been raised regarding the guilt al-Bazzaz has committed. Al-Bazzaz is considered a leading figure in the Iraqi media, and for some time was known to be one of the people closest to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and to be highly trusted by Iraqi security organs.

Among the questions raised one says that al-Bazzaz's arrival in Amman and the publicity given to his escape in the media was a political play act staged in coordination with the [Iraqi] Government. Al-Bazzaz was responsible for the psychological warfare during the recent war, and his new book, which caused an uproar, was published in the Iraqi papers before being published in Arab papers.

Al-Bazzaz was born in Mosul in northern Iraq. In the midseventies he joined the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, and immediately after graduating from university he got involved in the media and cultural fields. He quickly shot up the ladder of promotions, which was a cause for envy by many people. For a long time he held the post of director of the Iraqi cultural center in London.

During his stay in the British capital, at which time the Iraq-Iran war had reached its peak, al-Bazzaz established extensive relations with a large number of Arab journalists working in the emigree press. He became known for his openness, which distinguished him from many of those working in the Iraqi Embassy. He was also known for being flexible, a character that won him the respect of others, even from those who do not agree with his views and leanings.

Following his return to Iraq in 1986, al-Bazzaz occupied a senior post in the Iraqi ministry of information, which was then headed by Latif Nasif Jasim. With his candor, vigor, and the cultural qualities he acquired during his stay in the West, his personality began to overwhelm that of the minister. He began to compete with the minister over his job and over the close ties to the Iraqi decision-making center.

During the period between his return to Iraq and the Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait in August 1990, al-Bazzaz wrote a valuable documentary book about the Iraq-Iran war. It was said then that the book was written at the Iraqi president's personal request, and that the information the book contained came from interviews with Saddam Husayn and some senior Iraqi officials.

At this time al-Bazzaz was appointed chief editor of Iraqi newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH. Its chief editor, Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, became minister of information and later head of the Arab department at the foreign ministry. It is known that the appointment of chief editors in Iraq can only be done directly by Saddam Husayn. Appointment to such posts can be done only after the appointee proves his loyalty and after undergoing prolonged tests.

Apparently the skyrocketing climb of this man and his capabilities brought him closer to Saddam Husayn. This has stirred feelings of hatred for him by former minister of information Latif Nasif Jasim. It is said that Jasim's only qualification is that he belongs to a well-known tribe and that during 'Abd al-Karim Qasim's rule, Iraqi President Saddam Husayn took refuge in his father's house while running away from Iraqi intelligence.

According to some information, Latif Nasif Jasim, even after he was removed from the ministry of information and failed in the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party convention that was held following Iraq's defeat in Kuwait, continued to lie in wait for al-Bazzaz and to instigate government bodies and officials against him. In this personal warfare he exploited his position as an adviser to the Iraqi president, which went as far as leveling serious charges.

According to this information, Sa'd al-Bazzaz, who has limitless self-confidence and who thought that his position at the decision-making center is unshakable and inviolable, began to sharply criticize, in his articles in AL-JUMHURIYAH of which he is the chief editor, the performance of the media and some of the ministries during the war. In some of these articles he accused some

senior officials, including the former minister of information, of being below the required standard of capability in a confrontation of this kind.

Carrying the battle of criticism even further, al-Bazzaz wrote his [well]-known book about the second Gulf war. In his book he portrayed stands that are unusual in a country like Iraq. He went as far as saying that Baghdad entered the war on the basis of touristic information, and that only three persons knew about the attack on Kuwait; the Iraqi president, his defense minister, and his interior minister, and that the rest of the officials learned about the attack a few hours later from foreign radio stations.

The views here differ. Some people say the book in question was written with the knowledge of Saddam Husayn and of some Iraqi Government figures. Others say that the self-confidence of AL-JUMHURIYAH's chief editor has impelled him to act rashly and to cross the red line, something that has sent many bigger and more important people than him to the gallows.

Reports also say that Saddam Husayn sent a message to al-Bazzaz inviting him to return to Baghdad without fear.

Whatever the case may be, the contents of the book seemed ordinary and even in favor of the regime from the standpoint of a liberal person who lived in the West for some time. Nevertheless, this has aroused the wrath of a number of senior officials who joined Latif Nasif Jasim, including former foreign minister Tariq 'Aziz.

It is said in this regard that the matter does not involve only Latif Nasif Jasim and Tariq 'Aziz, but also includes Saddam Husayn's brothers and sons who, although they have experienced al-Bazzaz's loyalty to the Iraqi president, saw in the book a criticism of the Iraqi president and his method of dealing with international crises, particularly with a major crisis as this.

What is important is that Sa'd al-Bazzaz, who began to feel that the circles are tightening around him, fabricated a reason to travel abroad. He left Baghdad without even looking behind his shoulders. He resided in Jordan, and from there he was taking trips abroad; once to Indonesia, once to Yemen, and a third time to Tunisia.

In the interim, interviews with al-Bazzaz by newspaper chief editors and correspondents appeared in some Jordanian papers. AL-JUMHURIYAH continued to carry al-Bazzaz's name as chief editor. Also, his regular articles continued to appear in this papers, but were becoming free of his previous sharp criticism.

Those who met al-Bazzaz during this time say that after settling in Amman he tried to make his voice heard by the Iraqi president. He was and is still is afraid of keeping his name as chief editor and continuing to publish his articles, as this might be a trick to lure him back to Iraq, liquidate him, and send him to join the numerous ones who went before him.

According to those people, al-Bazzaz was in a state of unprecedented great panic following the assassination of the [Iraqi] nuclear scientist. He kept moving from one place to another, never sleeping in the same place twice. He stopped appearing in public places in Amman and no longer paid visits to Jordanian newspapers.

What made things worse was that a Jordanian newspaper chief editor published an article strongly criticizing al-Bazzaz's book, accusing the author of putting a powerful weapon in the hands of the forces hostile to Iraq. He also accused him of discussing matters prematurely and revealing secrets inappropriately.

It is said here that the Iraqi Embassy in Amman has informed several Jordanian circles that al-Bazzaz no longer has any relations with Iraq, that he does not represent any official Iraqi sources, and that he is wanted for "justice" in his country.

Al-Bazzaz is now in an unenviable situation. He is afraid of assassination at any moment. He is moving from one place to another in the Jordanian capital, but to no avail. What is puzzling is that the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH still carries his name as its chief editor and that some of the articles he writes for Jordanian papers appear in the paper.

Support of Religious Leaders Quoted

93AF0373A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
20 Jan 93 pp 14-15

[Article: "On Eve of Second Anniversary of 'Mother of Battles,' Leaders of Islamic Nations Hold Conference in Baghdad"]

[Text] Amidst the critical conditions that steadfast Iraq is currently confronting on the second anniversary of the epic of the Mother of Battles, the Arab and Muslim Baghdad hosted a huge gathering that included more than 1,000 scholars and leaders of Islamic thought and action who came from 51 countries to participate in the Sixth International Popular Islamic Conference.

Under the generous auspices of President Saddam Husayn, last Saturday marked the inauguration of the conference's agenda with a speech delivered by 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice president of the Revolutionary Command Council. In his speech, he affirmed that the immortal Mother of Battles is a landmark in the glorious Arab-Islamic history.

In his speech, he called upon all of the Arab Muslims in the four corners of the globe to once more perform their duties against the Satan of U.S. Zionism and colonialism that came together to attack Iraq and used all of the machinery of crime against the peaceful Muslims of Iraq.

'Irfan 'Abd-al-Hamid, secretary general of the International Popular Islamic Conference, said: "Baghdad once more is hosting our meeting. You know it to be very

strong and unshakable and unaffected by the conspiracies of the losers. Throughout history, it has been the fortress of patience and perseverance, the supporter of the nation in its times of need, and its sword in times of battle.

Several Sessions

The agenda of the conference included six sessions over three days. Before and during the working sessions, all of the participating dignitaries expressed their anger, disdain, and condemnation of the new American aggression against Iraq and described this act of cowardice as immoral, in contradiction with international and human laws and norms, and an expression of the dark hatred on the part of the administration of defeated President Bush toward Iraq and its culture.

The dignitaries of Islamic thought and action called upon the Islamic nation to strongly cooperate to defeat those who attack the land of the Islamic shrines, the House of the Prophet, and the cradle of Arab civilization, praying to almighty God to support Iraq in its continued victories over the atheists.

The conferees agreed to establish centers and subcommittees in a number of Arab and Islamic countries to follow up on the actions and recommendations of the conference, including Jordan, Pakistan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, England, and Indonesia, to form a network of communications and exchange among all of the members of the Popular Islamic Conference in these countries.

During its working sessions, the conference called for special programs to be implemented during the blessed month of Ramadan to support Iraq in each and every country that had participant at the conference, to mobilize the Islamic potential in support of Iraq, and to work toward mobilizing the Muslim nation to break the unjust blockade on Iraq at the Arab and Islamic level by pressuring the companies and banks in their countries to do business with Iraq and ignore the blockade.

The conference invited a number of officials in different ministries in Iraq to talk about the development and reconstruction campaigns implemented by the heroes of the military industries and the ministries. The conferees visited religious sights, as well as buildings that have been constructed in different cities in Iraq.

A major characteristic of the conference is the diversity of the conferees from different countries, including members of parliament, university professors, doctors, lawyers, engineers, intellectuals, leaders of student movements, and media personnel, in addition to the wide participation of the religious scholars from all Islamic sects and schools and the heads of Sufi methods all over the world.

Being held amidst such critical conditions in Iraq and on the second anniversary of the immortal Mother of Battles, the conference represents a huge demonstration of support from scholars and leaders of Islamic thought and

action all over the world. It also gained huge importance because it has confronted the aggression of the atheists and has become a witness to this horrid act on the part of the powers of evil and atheism, which are the enemies of the Arabs and of Islam.

In their statements to ALIF BA', a number of Islamic and Arab dignitaries participating in the conference affirmed that Iraq through its courageous stance and deep understanding of the realities of the international situation is capable of overcoming the difficulties and remaining, as usual, a beacon of the Arab and Islamic nation that reaffirms its support to Iraq in confronting the Western-Zionist alliance.

Commenting on the new aggression that targeted the South, Shaykh Muhammad Salah-al-Din, imam of al-Husayni Mosque in Sanaa and the official delegate of Bosnia and Hercegovina, said that the West "does not have any justification for its new aggression against Iraq and could not have any proof that justified its horrible act, which was initiated by the criminal Western-Zionist hatred under the cover of international legitimacy. But there is no legitimacy, and there is no internationalism. We are living the age of international barbarism. As for their slogans, they are just a pretext to implement their criminal conspiracies that target the pride of the Arabs and the Muslims. Their new world order is a new colonial structure that is aimed at oppressing the people of the earth and bringing them under American dominance. As for the policy of double standards followed by the United Nations, it is in fact the policy of 100 standards. They have a different standard for every person and every case. They have many criteria, which they use to judge the people according to their own whims."

'Ihsan (Seval), of the Association of the Muslim Nations in the Netherlands, said: "We came to show our solidarity with the people of Iraq and to stand by the people in condemning the new aggression by the United States and its allies against Iraq and all of the Muslim countries in the world. We hope that our voice will reach the leaders of the aggression loud and clear so that they will return to their senses and spare Iraq their evil acts."

Husayn Shah, of the same organization, said: "We hope that this conference will achieve its sublime aim in gathering the Muslims all over the world and in explaining the dimensions of the new world order. We do not believe in this order because it is a conspiracy based on illegitimate and unjust methods that aim at igniting conflicts between the Muslim people. We also came to deliver the voice of the Muslims to break the blockade imposed on the people of Iraq and to support it against all of the conspiracies that are being planned against it."

Faysal (Ilyas), of the Muslim Society of Dar al-'Arqam in Malaysia, said: "The conference is a good opportunity to bring together Muslims from all over the world to confront the fierce conspiracy that is being woven

against them. Our participation is a show of solidarity. We renew our support to Iraq in confronting the American Satan, which represents a true solidarity on the part of the Muslim Malaysian people with the Muslim people of Iraq. We have long asked to do anything that would alleviate our sorrow regarding the difficulties experienced by Iraq as a result of the unjust blockade. We now have our chance, which coincides with the second anniversary of the 30-country aggression against Iraq, which represents only part of the huge conspiracy that targets the Islamic nation at large, a fact that calls upon us to unite to confront it."

'Ali Ahmad al-Ruqi, secretary of the Yemeni Revolutionary Islamic Coalition, said: "The conference is a new awakening that gives us good tidings in confronting the attack of the 'train of death,' which will devour us one country after another unless we confront it decisively and truly both in words and in action and follow the Koran, which says: 'And hold fast by the rope that God stretches out for you and be not divided among yourselves.'" Commenting on the aggression against Iraq, he said: "We know and the West knows that the weak pretext for this shameless aggression has never been the reason. The aggression, the threats, and the blockade not only targets the gigantic cultural achievements in Iraq, nor the leadership of Iraq. It also targets the Arab nation by attempting to dominate Iraq." "As a result of the popular and official position of Yemen in supporting the brotherly people of Iraq, believing in the unity of hope and destiny, and realizing the national scale of the Mother of Battles, we in the Islamic Revolutionary Coalition, as well as the people of Yemen, are at the disposal of the victorious leader Saddam Husayn, may God be my witness."

Shaykh Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Husayn from Mauritania said: "Although it is the first time I have attended such an Islamic conference, I want to express my delight over the defeat of the pagans in the historical Mother of Battles. I came to visit my brothers in the government and people of Iraq, headed by the victorious leader Saddam Husayn, and to visit the souls of the martyrs, who are still with us in this blessed land. The conference expresses the truth and the belief that the aggression will ultimately be defeated. We are supporting you in this. The latest criminal act is just a page in the history that will reach the world at large because this tyrant Bush has planted unbelievable hatred and hypocrisy."

Hashim al-Hajj Yasin from Malaysia said: "We in Malaysia support Iraq. God willing, we will tell the people, especially in Malaysia, that our position of supporting Iraq is the correct path to follow. We pray to God that He grants victory to the Muslims and to the Iraqis, in particular."

Shaykh Jalal Hoseini of Iran called upon the Muslim world to unite its ranks and to reject imperialism, Zionism, and the enemies of Islam. He added that the Muslim nation supports the Iraqi Government and rejects the unjust economic blockade.

He said that the position of the Iraqi people is a strong and honorable one and has to remain as such, lest the Muslim world becomes weaker.

Sidi al-Amin (Niyas), one of the leaders of the (Tijanis) in Senegal, said: "This conference is distinguished from other conferences because its being held in special historical circumstances and at a time when the Islamic world fears the dire need to abide by Islam. The aggression against Iraq is directed at Islam, and such an aggression cannot be tolerated and has to be obliterated. Such actions attract the attention of the Muslims, and I believe that even the enemies understand that they have made a mistake and that they are between a rock and a hard place."

"We should not give them the opportunity to defeat us through the blockade. They are at a lurch, and they are smeared by the mud of defeat. They tried to raise doubts in Iraq by means of false accusations. All of these matters distinguish our conference from others."

Victorious Iraq

Shyakh 'Abdel Latif, an Islamic preacher and a Moroccan scholar affirmed that the conference was a success because it is a representation of the will of the Muslim people aspiring to free themselves from all colonial domination. It is an expression of hope that the Arab Islamic land and its people have once more returned to the true teachings of Islam.

He said: "This conference offers many indications that the national Islamic renaissance will very shortly be victorious, God willing."

"We found that the Iraqi people fully believe in the victory of its cause and in the victory of its heroic leader, President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, because there is complete harmony between the leader and the people. I have no doubt that Iraq will be victorious, holding its head high.

Friday Prayers

The conferees gathered in many mosques in Baghdad for Friday prayers on 15 January. Shaykh 'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu-Zant, a member of the Jordanian parliament, delivered the Friday ceremony at the mosque of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Kilani. Ahmad al-'Imam from Sudan delivered the Friday sermon at the mosque of Imam Abu-Hanifa. Shaykh Ibrahim Zayd al-Kilani, former Jordanian minister of Awqaf and member of parliament delivered the Friday sermon at 'Umm (al-Tubul) Mosque, and Shaykh Muhammad Salah-al-Din, imam of al-Husayni Mosque in Sanaa, delivered a sermon at al-(Samara) Mosque.

All of the sermons stressed the need to unite the Muslims, to support steadfast Iraq, to abide by the teachings of Islam in confronting Satan and the aggressors, and to support what is right. They prayed to Almighty God to grant victory to the leader and people of Iraq and to

strengthen their faith after He has granted them victory and supported them with grandeur.

Interior Minister Gives Press Conference

93AF0370A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 13 Jan p 12

[Article: "Interior Minister: 'Our Job Is To Provide Citizens With Security, Stability and Protection'"]

[Text] The staff of the internal security forces celebrated yesterday the 71st anniversary of the establishment of the police forces during which they renewed their allegiance to President Saddam Husayn to remain faithful in maintaining the security and stability of the citizens under the banner of "Allah Akbar." [God is great]

The interior minister, Mr. Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan, held a press conference during which he affirmed that the job of the internal security forces is to establish justice and the supremacy of law and to make sure that no one in the Iraq of President Saddam Husayn would be subjected to any injustice except as much as he deviates from the law.

While reviewing the objectives of the new plan of the ministry, his excellency the minister said that the ministry is seeking to create the exemplary police officer as far as performing his duties and establishing a close positive relationship with the citizens to enhance the mutual confidence while changing the job of the policeman from a specialized technical job to a general and noble job that is securing peace, stability, and protection of the people.

Answering questions posed by ALIF BA' about the reasons and motivations behind the new arrangements that took place in the structure of the departments of the ministry, the minister said that the main objective is to unify and integrate the different departments of the police under the leadership of one centralized command and to perform one function that is to protect the citizens, prevent crime, and to bypass the duplication of efforts due to a lack of centralization and the numerous specializations and labels.

While answering the questions posed by the reporters the minister said that the new plan has an objective of providing qualified personnel capable of securing confessions from the suspects through the use of modern methods in harmony with the spirit and principles of the revolution and to prevent the use of the old methods previously used in extracting information from the suspects. Toward this end an investigation unit was formed including qualified investigators to be entrusted with the big cases such as murder and theft, while leaving the small cases to the local authorities. He added that no one would be arrested unless it was according to a court order and after taking all necessary procedures.

Regarding combating bribery and corruption in some police departments, the minister said that such actions are performed only by those who do not have integrity

because our religion, our authentic Arab values and our Ba'th prevent us from resorting to crime or accepting ill-gotten money. The policeman should balance his needs and his resources. He added that the ministry has an emergency fund, the resources of which are available to anyone who distinguishes himself or anyone who finds himself in difficult circumstances. He added that he is available to help everyone. This is in addition to the ministry's continuous attempts to raise the standards of its staff and to the frequent gestures of our president to raise the standard of living for everyone.

He added that every citizen has access to the ministry through the complaint department that has our support. As an embodiment to the principles of President Saddam Husayn, the ministry is determined to establish justice and to do away with any injustice that could be felt by the citizens of our glorious land.

The minister hailed the experiment of the Ba'th Party and the citizens of the crimestoppers and called on everybody to shoulder their responsibilities in serving the glorious Iraq through cooperation and coordination with the departments of the Interior Ministry as far as reporting crime or arresting the thieves and the fugitives who threaten the peace and stability of society.

He added that the security of society is a collective responsibility for citizens, party members, and security forces because it is the sum of the active interaction of this relationship. The ministry is seriously seeking to realize such relationships through efficient departments that have national feeling and technical understanding of their responsibilities on the one side and between an understanding people that practice their roles through their cooperation with the concerned authorities who realize the required peace and stability.

Regarding the functions of the ministry in combating economic crimes, the minister said that the ministry is serious and decisive in controlling the greed of some people who take advantage of the citizens through its attempts to monitor the market and the prices based on the functions entrusted to the Department of the Economic Crime Control. He added that through our agriculture campaigns, the ministry is organizing voluntary activities to provide food and actively participate in breaking the unjust economic blockade imposed upon our country.

In conclusion, the minister said that all the police departments have one job and that is the peace and the security of the citizens.

Justice Minister on Judicial Improvements

93AF0367A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 3 Feb 93 p 18

[Article: "No Shortage in Judicial Cadres; 100 New Judges Appointed"]

[Text] Statistical sources in the Ministry of Justice mentioned to ALIF BA', that during the first half of last

year, the 323 courts in the land have received 720,000 criminal and civil family cases, while the statistics of 1991 show more than half a million cases.

This number of cases requires an adequate number of judges with a view towards developing the judicial services and speeding up the decisionmaking process of these cases within the specified schedule in order to achieve justice and stability and to give people their rights as soon possible.

ALIF BA' met with the Minister of Justice, Mr. Shabib Lazim al-Maliki, who talked to us about the procedures taken by the ministry to deal with the shortage in the judicial cadres and the importance of appointing 100 new judges and the method of placing them. This is in addition to the role of the faculties of law and the judicial institute in dealing with the shortage.

The minister said that the ministry has started implementing a comprehensive plan extending to the year 2000 developed by a high-level ministerial committee aiming to increase the number of judges to keep pace with the actual need of the courts and the volume of cases presented to them in order to render decisions within the specified time limits.

In an attempt to deal with the shortage in the judicial cadres, the ministry took fast steps in different directions most important of which was approving the appointment of 100 judges according to new regulations set by a high-level committee that was formed by an order from the august presidential office under my chairmanship and with a membership of the chief justice, the public prosecutor, and the general director of the judicial institute. This committee stressed the importance of making good use of the experience and efficiency of public prosecutors who have more than 15 years of experience and also the lawyers who have 10 years or more experience.

The justice minister added that the new judges will be appointed in the courts across the land according to the actual need of the courts and in accordance with the volume of cases submitted to each court with a view of alleviating the pressure facilitating the mission of rendering decisions in these claims taking into account the experience and specializations of the judges, who are going to enjoy the same rights and privileges of the other judges.

The justice minister indicated that the plan includes coordination between the ministry and Saddam Law School and other law schools in the country to choose a specific percentage of the students in these schools who distinguish themselves in order to appoint them in the judicial cadre after preparing them in such a way that is in harmony with the important missions entrusted to them.

The minister of justice mentioned the approval for the august revolutionary council to appoint 10 assistant district attorneys as judges, as an exception to the regulations, in appointing judges that represent a new

source to increase the number of judges by putting the experiences of the district attorneys to good use.

Baghdad Mayor Talks About Problems, Bribery

*93AE0301B Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
16 Dec 92 pp 36-39*

[Interview with Baghdad Mayor Suhayl Muhammad Salih by Hasan al-'Ani and Bayan al-'Arid in Baghdad; date not given"]

[Text] Is it possible to interview an official without being harangued by justifications and embellishments?

Is it possible to go the heart of the matter without enraging the official or making him angry at the interviewing magazine? Shall we openly express our thoughts and impressions? Will the mayor of Baghdad help us by looking at problems not as a state official, but as a critic, a journalist, and a citizen? He behaved during our three-hour interview as an observer who diagnosed the actual condition of the city of Baghdad and who shared with the public its daily problems with municipal services.

"Agreed...I would be happy to give you this interview in a sincere democratic atmosphere that is devoid of empty pleasantries aimed at indulging the official!"

This was how Baghdad Mayor Suhayl Muhammad Salih indicated pleasure at the interview and sincere hope that it would be constructively democratic!

There is no place then, and no need, for embellished half-truths. Let us ask questions like "Does bribery permeate some municipal agencies?" "Are citizens fed up with municipal services?" "Is dereliction of duty is so bad it seems deliberate?" and "Is Baghdad attentive only to its gentrified areas and not serving all quarters of the capital equally and without discrimination?"

Those were blunt questions we asked, maybe even harsh, but they came as no surprise to the mayor. No sooner had we asked our frank questions than the man shook his head saying: "All of this is true. Yes, there is bribery, and there is dereliction of duty." He paused a moment, as if to bring the overall picture into focus, and then added: "Quote me as saying that the mayor of Baghdad is not happy with the municipality."

The three-hour appointment was not long enough for all of the subjects ALIF BA' wanted to cover, so we returned another day to attend one of his "town meetings," which lasted from 0900 to 1400. Despite his busy schedule, the mayor suggested that we join him on a free-wheeling tour of various areas of Baghdad. We also made a field visit to al-Rashid unit and were introduced to its operations and services.

We ended up with a mass of facts, information, and data and an even bigger mass of straight talk and a true portrait of the municipality, without any makeup!

To Start With...

The mayor of Baghdad said: "I will go beyond interview guidelines to say right at the start that municipal employees usually bring to my attention only the positives and shield me from the negatives. This is the bitter truth to which I admit."

[ALIF BA'] This is sad.

[Salih] Very sad.

[ALIF BA'] What avenue is there to the whole truth?

[Salih] There are two avenues...two sets of watchful eyes—those of the citizens, as expressed in their complaints, and those of the media, as expressed in articles and commentaries.

[ALIF BA'] How do you see the city through the eyes of citizens and the media?

[Salih] The services we offer fall short of our objectives. I believe that emphasis should be on fieldwork rather than on administration. I personally do not handle any paperwork in the morning. I walk around the streets of Baghdad every morning, and it is my personal impression that the municipality is derelict in providing services appropriate for Baghdad as a capital city with a fine reputation, a glorious past, a steadfast present, and a leading role.

[ALIF BA'] Are we to understand that the flaws have been identified?

[Salih] Certainly. The situation is obvious to me. Even though I am being shielded from the negatives, I am aware that the municipality has numerous problems. Things have gone as bad as bribery. Some employees charge "commissions" in order to facilitate one thing or another, regardless of whether it is legal or not. I know that some of them even openly request bribes in the thousands of dinars. Bribery is one way to falsify facts and pervert the truth.

[ALIF BA'] But it has been our belief that diagnosing the problem is half the solution?

[Salih] That is true. I believe that we have corrected many flaws. As a factual example, I have been quite alert to, and very firm about, forgery and bribery attempts and was able to apprehend the perpetrators. A formal investigation is currently under way, and those who prove to be involved will be referred to the courts for appropriate action.

I only wish to emphasize at this point that we should not point an accusing finger at all personnel just because one or more employees of this or that organization are spurning rules and regulations. I am convinced that [most are] honest employees [who] exercise due care and diligence despite their difficult responsibilities under oppressive conditions and despite harsh Iraqi weather, both in winter and in summer.

[ALIF BA'] With due respect to what the mayor has just said, citizens continue to complain about so-called fines because they are usually meted out haphazardly.

[Salih] I cannot deny this or confirm it. I meet thousands of citizens every month, and a chance at confrontation is available to all of them. None of them made any such complaint, which would have prompted me to look into the situation. By the same token, I cannot monitor or police every single employee. All in all, we must still rely on each employee's conscience and sense of responsibility. It should be understood that the primary directive to all units is not to burden citizens with any financial or economic hardships. I repeat that my door is open to [receive] any comments of that kind, and I am grateful in advance for those citizens who cooperate with in us snaring unlawful practices, no matter by whom.

We Also Are Justified

The mayor said that objectivity calls for fairness and cites a number of obstacles to the optimum delivery of services. Such obstacles include, or are led by, severe understaffing in government service. "Baghdad is ever-growing, but the technical and labor force is shrinking or, at best, remains fixed and does not grow in tandem with the expansion of the service area in the capital. Baghdad sits on 900 square km of land. This is a lot, if we consider the horizontal expansion of residential areas and the attendant need for water, sewers, forestation, and cleaning services. This calls for the addition to existing personnel of no less than 6,000 new municipal workers and of various automated machinery and equipment. There are 11 service units in direct contact with the public, and each of those units urgently needs 10 machines, which indicates the dearth of equipment currently in service.

"Dozens of autos, trucks, and combines are out of order. Most of them need spare parts and tires, and those are not easily obtainable. Working equipment is "tired" and operates at half its original capacity."

The mayor bitterly continues: "In practical terms, the equipment shortage alone has reduced services by 30 to 50 percent, not to mention personnel shortages, which, as I mentioned, amount to 6,000 workers. We must also realize that a considerable percentage of service workers are of ages unsuitable for delivering municipal services under severe conditions of hot and cold weather, especially in view of the size of garbage and refuse. Most of those workers are past 50!

We want everyone to be in the picture and understand how things really stand. I am not trying to make excuses, but I am saying that we also are justified!"

A Problem Called The Public

[ALIF BA'] What is the solution, then? Don't you have specific ideas or alternative solutions?

[Salih] To be sure. The search for a solution is our primary concern. Let me tell you that most older workers

request retirement. I do not blame them, but I try to placate them and reason with them to persuade them to keep on working for the time being, at least until we are past this unfair siege of our country.

Ours is not a financial problem. If thousands of workers applied for work today, they would be hired at once, but not many are willing to work for government wages. Wages for construction workers in the private sector now amount to 25 dinars, and foremen command a lot more. I cannot match those wages, because I am constrained by law. In an attempt at a solution, I resorted to incentives and overtime to ameliorate existing salaries and wages, but this still does not attract new applicants. Such measures may be somewhat helpful to current municipal employees, but they will not attract outside workers. This is the undeniable truth.

We even focused heavily on repairing and rehabilitating the machinery, but each machine gets closer to the end of its working life with every working day.

Citizens insist on assorted services, and indeed it is their right to demand those services of the municipality and its workers. I feel sad when a pile of garbage remains uncollected for two or three days or when sewage overflows into the streets because one pump or another is down. Power interruptions, which is something beyond our jurisdiction and control, can also bring down the pumps.

But I am even sadder at open public hostility toward the municipality. Such hostility thwarts with us and could, knowingly or unknowingly, undermine municipal efforts and services. Is it reasonable to litter our main avenues and streets with waste and garbage?

Is it reasonable for citizens to dump their garbage into the sewers and cause them to clog? Is it reasonable for one of our units to replant an area of Baghdad 20 times, and this is no exaggeration? Yes, the unit replanted 20 times, only to have the public pull out the plants 20 times.

How can we deliver our services properly when citizens, and not a small number at that, let their cattle roam freely and eat our plantings as if they were on a range?

I am also saddened that certain citizens persist in their infractions and violations, even after they are brought to their attention, without realizing that they are destroying the beauty of their capital.

Examples of such problems are legion and are not limited to cutting down trees and destroying hedges.

[ALIF BA'] It seems that you are unhappy with both municipal services and with public behavior?

[Salih] I have been forthright about the municipality and should likewise be forthright about the public. Garbage bags are put to other uses. Accumulated citizen debt [unpaid bills] in the millions remains unpaid for water services. What are we to do? We issue warnings, and then we are forced to shut the water off—wasted efforts that could have been gainfully utilized otherwise. Thousands

of shops, stores, and warehouses are built and erected in areas and quarters where they are not permitted to be. What can we do about that when we have limited manpower for policing and control? Actual violations require 100 times as many employees as we now have.

In short, I wish that the public would be more responsible and not take it for granted that the cleanliness and beauty of their city is a job for a foreign entity called the "City of Baghdad." Each and every citizen is a mayor of Baghdad when it comes to caring and responsible citizenship.

A New Image for al-Bayya'

We headed for "halfway shops" on (Qatr-al-Nada) Street, in the direction of the garage and automobile showrooms in al-Bayya'. Those are the yards where junk is collected until it is taken to authorized landfills. Those yards lie immediately behind the showrooms and in the midst of residential areas and modern apartment houses that are exposed to the daily incineration of trash and asphyxiating smoke from early evening until late at night. Why is junk left to accumulate in these yards, and why is not taken away regularly?

The mayor, the manager of that unit, and ALIF BA' witnessed how those junk yards turned into playing fields after they were turned over to the Olympic Committee. The mayor pointed out how clean the area looked and explained:

[Salih] This pretty picture cost us a diligent drive that lasted five consecutive days at extraordinary wages. Al-Rashid unit, like the remaining 10 units, has a shortage of heavy equipment. More than 23 disabled trucks sit idle in its garage because of the tire shortage. Many of the trucks used to transport junk from halfway yards have also been idled by the shortage of tires and their high cost.

[ALIF BA'] A long while ago, the owners of automobile showrooms in al-Bayya' loudly protested regulations that were applied to them but not to showrooms in al-Rasafah. What is the reason for that?

[Salih] The changes that were asked of them were an initiative of the unit manager to beautify his bailiwick. But the showroom lots are supposed to be surrendered as is in 10 to 15 years. It came to our attention, however, that some showroom owners recently took to junk those sites just before they were due to be surrendered. This is a violation, and we have closed down a number of shops in line with existing controls. I personally went to see them several times to ascertain their situation. We have a plan to relocate the showrooms from both al-Karkh and al-Rasafah to Kasrah and 'Atash. A larger area has been designated for that purpose, and it should accommodate more showrooms that exist today. I have been apprised of this project and [know that] work on it will begin shortly. No one will be hurt. Existing contracts will be honored until their expiration date, at which time their holders will be given parcels of land and six months to get them ready.

Wastewater

Water and wastewater are double troubles that the mayor discussed as we moved from al-Jihad toward al-Junaynah and (Ghazaliyah).

[Salih] We have problems because we lack spare parts for water and sewer equipment. Sewers are a big problem, and the public has a right [to complain]. But when it comes to water, we should complain about the public. But how?

Water was the first service restored after the aggression, which is a feather in the cap of my predecessor, and I take no credit for it. And yet, we find that unpaid water bills are accumulating in spite of instructions to the contrary. In the future, we will announce that water will be shut off for nonpayment and will be restored only after the payment of a 100-dinar fine.

[ALIF BA'] Speaking of water leads us to inquire about the sewer problems encountered by both the municipality and the public. We wonder what the story is?

[Salih] The removal of wastewater is a free service. We have 250 sewage [pumping] stations in Baghdad, but manpower is our primary problem. Those stations are run by electricity to pump in and pump out, and the interruption of electric power to one of them translates into bottlenecks and problems, because somebody must be there to operate them. We now have the option to house a worker and his family in a trailer at each station, which would resolve 50 to 70 percent of the problems.

In al-Jihad quarter, an intense five-day drive succeeded in pumping out the accumulated sewage that threatened people's homes. But the problem seems worse in al-Junaynah and (Ghazaliyah), where a major, but as yet uncompleted, project links the area to al-Shu'lah and al-Karkh sewer system. Citizens have already started to utilize the system, however, which is why there is a problem. [end Salih]

The mayor explained that al-Junaynah and (Ghazaliyah) project calls for seven pumping stations and for a major network to serve al-Rahmaniyah, (al-Jawadin), al-Junaynah, and (Ghazaliyah). He said that the network, which will cost 16.5 million dinars, is being implemented at the recommendation of the president after work on it was suspended due to the aggression. Al-Faruq Company is currently implementing the remaining stages of the project as an alternative solution that would remove 50 to 60 percent of the cause of the problem.

"There are major difficulties, of course, including the removal of accumulated water and the transportation of equipment, especially because underground tunnels are being dug below the rapid transit lines. The deadline for completing the project is set for 9 September of this year!"

The Baghdad of Tomorrow

The mayor commented on the Palestine Street area: "That street suffered 22 craters in one month as a result of heavy bombing in Baghdad. It is my personal opinion, however, that the craters were also caused by inadequate testing of

soil and sewage, flawed sewer construction, and the manner in which the public uses those networks."

The recent blooming of Palestine Street led us to speak of Baghdad's cleanliness, its parks, and the restoration of popular means of recreation. What does the next year hold for Baghdad?

[Salih] The cleanliness of Baghdad, the sewer issue, and the creation of recreation outlets. Examples are the 28 Nisan park in the midst of residential buildings and another park in al-Dawrah. We are also making a push for al-Zawra' Gardens, which are frequented by upwards of 1.5 million citizens. I sincerely request our citizens to safeguard the beauty and longevity of those sites because they belong to all of us.

We are also coordinating with the Federation of Cooperatives to build cooperative markets in all of the areas that lack such services.

Has this interview come to an end, then? We do not think so. We stood under the sun to express our desire to see simple, popular attractions that brighten the lives of ordinary citizens—clean, painted kiosks along Abu-Nawwas street that would sell inexpensive meals to families who have forgotten what it is to take a promenade and who would like to forget the looks of the river and of the corniche and its shops that charge astronomical prices.

A grand celebration hall to feature popular musicians and carts that offering refreshments at low prices.

Crafts and games, such as portrait drawing and flower arranging, by talented youths who would receive small contributions from the audience.

Water-spraying tanks—will they ever return to cool down Baghdad's hot summer? Our fountains—will their waters dance this summer?

May we dream of a Baghdad that is cleaner and more beautiful? Dreams can still be fulfilled.

AL-THAWRAH New Chief Editor Presents His Views

93AF0368A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 3 Feb 93 p 10

[Interview by Isma'il 'Isa, new editor in chief of AL-THAWRAH: "Iraqi Media Defended Iraq's Sovereignty and Future"]

[Text] The local Arab and international political arena is full of many events of which the outcome of some of them affects us while others seem distant but are important to us. ALIF BA' chose to conduct an interview with Mr. Taha al-Basri, the editor in chief of AL-THAWRAH, considering him a well-known media personality and a diplomat who spent many years with the foreign ministry. In our meeting we covered many topics starting with the Iraqi peace initiative proposed to the new American administration, the Irani expansionist ambitions, the concepts of the new world order and the role of the Iraqi media in the immortal epic of the Mother of Battles.

Iraq Demands Its Rights

[Isa] It is well-established that there are expectations based on the results of the political platform of the candidate of the Democratic Party who won the election, and that the new American president is determined to concentrate on the missions of domestic change and to keep away from the troubles of foreign policy. What is the view towards settling the conflict between American and Iraqi viewpoints and positions in the light of the declared trends of President Clinton?

[al-Basri] One of the most prominent ambitions of President Clinton is change. In explaining this, he stressed that he wants to drastically change the deteriorating economic situation that indicates that foreign policy will not be the top priority in his platform. But we have to understand that not all that is being said in the political campaigns can be achieved. Some special interest groups might persuade the new president to adopt a foreign policy not less harmful than that of his predecessor. But this is only an expectation. What is asked of President Clinton is to be in harmony with himself and to make good on the promises that he made to the American people who voted for him on the basis of his program that calls for change. The American voter understands that change means an objective transition from a bad economic situation with rising rates of stagnation, inflation, and unemployment to a situation where it is felt that change has actually taken place.

As for the issue of positions and viewpoints, Iraq is not demanding anything more than that the United States respect its will to maintain its sovereignty, national integrity, and independence according to the charter of the United Nations and international community. It is not conceivable that Iraq would make an enemy of the United States just for the sake of it; it is due to objective justifications without which its own integrity and existence are in danger. Thus, the Iraqi initiative should pave the way for forming the relationship between Iraq and the United States in a manner that serves the legitimate interests of both parties and for serious participation in implementing the foreign policy ideas of the new American president in attempting not to make crises or enemies.

The False Exportation of the Iranian Revolution

[Isa] All indicators point to Iranian moves to regain its regional role in the area. In your opinion, what are the motivations for this role and also the consequences of the 30-country aggression against our glorious Iraq?

[al-Basri] The motives for the Iranian role in the area are the same motives that prompted Iran to launch a wicked attack against us for eight years. The issue of exporting the revolution and the policy of expansionism is still dominating the thought and behavior of the Iranian regime. The Iranian role during the 30-country aggression was no different. Especially because Iranian attempts to seize the opportunity of Iraq's preoccupation with confronting the aggression has enhanced the

attempts of the regime to continue its threats to the area and achieve its expansionist ambitions. The example of Abu Musa Island is very clear to us.

The Battle of the Iraqi Media

[Isa] In the Mother of Battles the enemy media played a major role. How would you evaluate our media battle with the enemy media mechanism during and after the 30-country aggression?

[al-Basri] Bearing in mind the huge difference between the components of the media mechanism that was completely devoted to attacking Iraq with all its technological and human resources, on the one hand, and the potentials of the Iraqi media on the other hand, this media battle was not an easy one at all. The important matter in the media is to start with a fact and build on it. It is true that the Iraqi media was legitimately defending the sovereignty, destiny, and future of Iraq. From this point the Iraqi media was able to face the big wave and managed to weather the storm and was able to reach the minds of the good people in the world who did not have preconceived positions.

The Mother of Battles, Past, Present, and Future

[Isa] We believe that the Mother of Battles has not ended and that the latest aggression against our country is proof of the imperialistic aggressive attempts spearheaded by the countries of the imperialistic coalition. What do you think is the required role on the national, regional, and international level, for the continuation of the Mother of Battles with its Arab and human flames to uproot the centers of aggression in the area?

[al-Basri] The Mother of Battles has never been a military battle that ended with the end of the fighting between the armies. As expressed by our leader Saddam Husayn, may God keep him, it is the past, the present, and the future of the struggle of this nation and all it entails for all aspects of life not only on the Iraqi level or the Arab level but also on the international level considering it the battle of principles and strong faith against the powers of aggression and oppression.

What is now required is to strengthen the concepts of the Mother of Battles in the fields of steadfastness, confrontation, construction, and struggle against the powers of oppression in the world, and to do away with the double standards in international dealings. This could be achieved by clinging to the method of confronting aggression and mobilizing the powers of good in the world to undertake their role in confronting injustice and uprooting all centers of aggression wherever they might be.

In conclusion, we would like to mention that Mr. al-Basri occupied many posts before becoming the chief editor of AL-THAWRAH. He was the director general of the Iraqi news agency, president of the Journalist Association, undersecretary at the Ministry of Culture and Media, and the Iraqi ambassador to Argentina.

Government Employees' Salary Schedule Announced
93AE0294B Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 30 Dec 92 p 14

[Article: "Finance Ministry Issues Public Decree; How Pay Increases Computed in Accordance With (Presidential) Favor]

[Text] The Finance Ministry issued a public decree Sunday for government offices on the method of computing the salaries of government employees and the socialist system in accordance with President Commander Saddam Husayn's favor.

The decree, No. 24/57/802 of 12 December 1992, provides for the following:

1. The salaries of those covered by the favor of the president commander, God preserve him, will be

increased in accordance with the rates of increase decided for each group covered.

2. The increase will be added according to the rates decided for each group covered:

- The limits of junior and senior grades and scales of annual raises as provided for in Article 1, Clause 3 of the amended Civil Service Code 24 of 1960, as well as the limits for junior and senior grades and the scales of annual raises or increases stipulated in the laws, codes, and other service regulations, and amended on this basis.
- Salaries decided upon for academic degrees at the time of first hiring.
- Junior and senior limits for all jobs listed in the tables attached to the Amended Basic Code 25 of 1960. It is up to the departments that implement the provisions of specialized service to prepare tables along the lines of the job tables attached to this decree.

**Table 3. Junior and Senior Pay Grades for Positions Provided for in Basic Code 25 of 1960
With Addition of 30 Percent Increase**

Pay Scale Before Increase	Pay Scale After Increase
Minimum-Maximum	Minimum-Maximum
254,500-303,500	331,000-512,000
209,000-393,500	272,000-512,000
179,000-393,500	233,000-512,000
166,000-393,500	216,000-512,000
254,500-354,500	331,500-461,000
209,000-354,500	272,000-461,000
179,000-354,500	233,000-461,000
166,000-354,500	216,000-461,000
159,500-354,500	207,500-461,000
148,000-354,500	192,500-461,000
144,000-354,500	187,500-461,000
140,000-354,500	182,000-461,000
209,000-328,500	272,000-427,500
179,000-328,500	233,000-427,500
159,500-328,500	207,500-427,500
148,000-328,500	192,500-427,500
140,000-328,500	182,000-427,500
137,500-328,500	179,500-427,500
132,000-328,500	172,000-427,500
148,000-292,000	192,500-380,000
132,000-292,000	172,000-380,000
164,500-285,500	214,000-371,500
159,500-285,500	207,500-371,500
148,000-285,500	192,500-371,500
140,000-285,500	182,000-371,500
137,500-285,500	179,000-371,500
132,000-285,500	172,000-371,500
127,000-246,000	165,500-320,500

**Table 3. Junior and Senior Pay Grades for Positions Provided for in Basic Code 25 of 1960
With Addition of 30 Percent Increase (Continued)**

Pay Scale Before Increase	Pay Scale After Increase
148,000-246,500	192,500-320,500
140,000-246,500	182,000-320,500
136,000-246,500	172,000-320,500

3. The minimum for special grade jobs will be 425 dinars, and the maximum will be 771 dinars. The range of the annual raise will be 21,700 dinars.

4. The maximum for a director general position will be 684 dinars.

5. Maximum for total salary and allocations paid to public and socialist sector employees as provided by the laws, decisions, regulations, and legally valid instructions, will be increased by the same percentages granted to employee grades.

6. The designation "doctorate holders" in Article 1-H of the Presidential Council Book includes holders of doctoral and equivalent degrees according to the decision of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

7. The phrase "doctors" in Article 1-T refers to graduates of Iraqi medical colleges or their equivalents, and does not include dentists or veterinarians, because their work is like that of their peers covered by Article 3 of the Presidential Council Book.

8. By "service," as provided in Article 4 of the Presidential Council Book, with reference to retirees, what is meant is service counted for pension purposes, of whatever type.

9. Junior and senior pension limits will have the 40 percent increase set in Article 4, as follows:

- Minimum military pension: 80,500 dinars
- Minimum civil pension: 75 dinars
- Minimum pension for those covered by Revolutionary Command Council Resolution 282 of 24 October 1992: 102 dinars
- Maximum pension for civil employees: 300 dinars

10. Cut-off pensions granted by special resolutions will increase by 20 percent of the pension with the exception of retirees holding party badges. Their stipends will be increased according to their period of service in line with rates determined by Article 4 of the Presidential Council Book above.

11. As regards citizens who postponed the deduction of suspensions from their pensions to reach the maximum pension, their pensions will be 300 dinars upon retirement.

12. This decree takes effect 1 January 1993.

**Table 1. Limits of Employee Grades and Annual Raises in Accordance With Amended
Civil Service Code No. 24 of 1960 After 30 Percent Increase**

Grade	Salary Range Before Increase	Salary Range After Increase	Range of Raises in Dinars	Promotion Intervals in Years
First-A	367,500-393,500	478,000-512,000	8,500	
First-B	298,500-354,500	388,500-461,000	8,500	5
Second	254,500-296,000	331,000-380,000	6,700	5
Third	209,000-246,500	272,000-320,500	6,700	5
Fourth	179,000-202,500	233,000-263,500	5,100	2
Fifth	159,500-172,500	207,500-224,500	3,200	5
Sixth	148,000-158,000	192,500-205,500	3,200	3
Seventh	132,500-142,500	172,000-185,500	3,400	4
Eighth	127,000-131,000	165,500-170,500	1,700	3
Ninth	123,000-125,500	160,000-163,500	1,700	2
10th	103,000-122,000	134,000-159,000	1,700	3

Table 2. Limits of Employee Grades and Annual Raises in Accordance With Amended Civil Service Code Number 24 of 1960 After 30 Percent Increase

Grade	Salary Range Before Increase	Salary Range After Increase	Range of Raises in Dinars	Promotion Intervals in Years
First-A	438,000-469,000	613,500-657,000	10,900	
First-B	356,000-422,500	498,500-591,500	10,900	5
Second	303,500-348,000	425,000-487,500	8,700	5
Third	249,000-294,000	349,000-412,000	8,700	5
Fourth	213,500-241,500	299,000-338,500	6,600	4
Fifth	190,000-205,500	266,000-288,000	4,400	5
Sixth	186,000-188,500	246,500-264,000	4,400	3
Seventh	157,500-170,000	220,000-238,000	4,400	4
Eighth	151,500-156,000	212,500-218,500	2,200	3
Ninth	146,500-150,000	205,500-210,000	2,200	2
10th	122,500-145,000	171,000-203,000	2,200	2

National Assembly Plans Against Embargo

*93AE0347B Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
10 Jan 93 p 8*

[Text] Baghdad—The National Assembly has announced a new action plan to approach world countries, parliaments, and political figures in order to explain the hardships the Iraqi people are suffering because of the implementation of the UN resolutions, especially the economic sanctions.

Dr. Safa' Salih al-'Umar, chairman of the Arab and International Relations Committee at the National Assembly, said the plan aims at explaining the conditions from which the Iraqi people are suffering as a result of the economic blockade and the Gulf war. The plan will stress the need to lift the blockade in order to ensure food and medicine shipments for all the Iraqi people. It will also stress the historical integrity of the Iraqi soil and people, the preservation of Iraq's regional independence, the removal of the effects of intervention in Iraq's internal affairs represented in UN Resolution 688, the unfreezing of Iraq's foreign assets, seeking repayment of debts owed by other countries in order to be used for the purchase of food and medicine, and getting rid of the restrictions of Resolution 778.

Dr. al-'Umar added: The plan also stresses that Iraq's security and stability are a crucial part of the security and stability of the Arab region and the Middle East. Chairman of the Arab and International Relations Committee then spoke about the means to implement this plan. He said it comprises exchange of visits, constant attendance at Arab and international conferences, boosting the effectiveness of the participating delegations, participating in all official and nonofficial activities outside Iraq, whether individually or jointly with other [government] bodies and popular organizations. This is in addition to the exchange of personal letters with international parliamentary or political figures. The plan also calls for the potential exploitation of parliamentary sessions in other countries in order to explain

the position of Iraq. It further calls for coordination with the foreign ministry regarding activities abroad, with the office of foreign relations in the Iraqi state's leadership [as published], and with the Organization of Friendship, Peace, and Solidarity, and other mass organizations.

Dr. al-'Umar said Iraqi communities in world countries will be relied upon and contact with them shall be maintained. We will review the method of communicating with the world, taking into consideration the international changes, in order to open new loopholes in the political blockade imposed on Iraq. The National Assembly will also attend parliamentary meetings sponsored by the UN General Assembly.

Policies of First Islamic Bank Described

93AE0301A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 16 Dec 92 p 22

[Article by Rafal Isma'il: "First Islamic Bank in Iraq Capitalized at 126.4 Billion Dinars; Will Not Deal on Basis of Interest Rates"]

[Text] The first Iraqi Islamic bank for investment and development was recently created by decree of the Revolutionary Command Council. The name of the bank is the Iraqi Islamic Banking Company for Investment and Development.

What is the purpose of this bank? How does it differ from other government and private banks? What is its function and the nature of the services it will offer? Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif Humaym, chairman of the new bank and member of its constituent committee, responds:

[Humaym] The Islamic Bank seeks to contribute to the country's economic development in accordance with public policy and in conformity with Islamic shari'ah. It will strive to cooperate fully with other banks within the framework of the country's economic and fiscal policies.

The Islamic Bank will be different only in its operating style, which will be based on the rulings of Islamic shari'ah. Unlike other banks, it will not pay a predetermined interest

rate. Shareholders, subscribers, and depositors will share in the profits generated by the banks from investment activities in trade, real estate, agriculture, and so on.

An Islamic bank, as it contributes to industrialization and economic development, therefore engages in two types of activity—banking and investment.

[Isma'il] What is the significance of creating such a bank under the conditions that currently prevail in our country? To what extent will it serve economic activity and help break the siege?

[Humaym] This bank will be of great service to the country at this stage because its primary purpose is to gather the monetary liquidity that is circulating in the country and employ it for service purposes, since high levels of liquidity can be shielded only by strong economic activity. The bank will therefore help employ the savings deposited with it in investment activity. As a result, liquidity in circulation will be absorbed and withheld from circulation for a specific period of time. For instance, the bank will engage in trade, among many other activities, by importing foods and making them available to citizens at reasonable prices. This would reduce monetary liquidity in circulation and would employ funds in useful endeavors.

The creation of this type of bank is mandated by current conditions in our country, which needs banks whose operations are not limited to banking activity. Investment plays a major role in driving economic growth because both are mutually supportive. In other words, active investment propels economic growth and vice versa.

As such, the Islamic Bank does not differ from agricultural and industrial investment banks.

[Isma'il] That explains the bank's purpose and the nature of its operations. How about administrative aspects, such as subscriber qualifications and the number of shares [to be made available]? How many directors will it have, and what conditions must they meet [qualifications must they possess]?

[Humaym] The Revolutionary Command Council decree of 11 August 1992, which established the bank and set its constituent committee at 12 members, who are charged with defining the ratio and manner of subscription, as well as with determining the number of original board members, their alternates, and their qualifications.

The most important quality for a subscriber is to have goals that are in tune with bank objectives. Board members must be experienced and qualified and must be good at the art of dealing. The bank is governed by articles of Iraqi Central Bank Law 64 of 1976 and Company Law No. 36 of 1983.

[Isma'il] What guarantees are there that the bank will be successful and that it will win the confidence of citizens?

[Humaym] Suffice it to say that tangible bank contributions in the investment field will guarantee its success and continued operations, which in turn will create a climate of trust between us and them, not to mention the reputations that members of the constituent committee have earned in domestic markets.

It should be noted that the Islamic bank concept may be new to Iraqis, but such banks have been long-established in several Arab and foreign countries, where they work hand-in-hand with the rest of the banks and make major contributions to investment projects in their respective countries. They are very popular with the citizenry.

It should also be noted that the Islamic Bank is capitalized at 126.4 billion dinars and that, regardless of whether subscribers are Iraqi or Arab, there is a subscription ceiling of 200,000 shares, the price of which is to be determined by the Baghdad stock exchange.

The bank is now in the process of organizing and will not be operational before 1993.

To conclude, we in Iraq are about to embark on a new dual-purpose banking experience that could be successful or could end up in failure.

Will it succeed and persevere, or will it stagnate in mid-stream? Only time will tell.

Government Announces Prices of Basic Food Items

93AE0294A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 30 Dec 92 p 13

[Article: "Foodstuff Prices"]

[Text] The Supreme Committee for Price Monitoring has set maximum wholesale and retail prices for basic foodstuffs until further notice. The list of prices follows:

Item	Unit of Measure	Wholesale Price (dinars)	Retail Price (dinars/kg)
Sugar	50 kg sack	550	11,500
Rice	50 kg sack	450	9,500
Local Flour	50 kg sack	180	4
Shortening	1 kg	21	22
Oil	1 liter	21	22
Tea	1 kg	56	58

Falih 'Ali Salih, president of the Supreme Committee for Price Monitoring, said that sales would be limited to food agencies with Chamber of Commerce food

permits, and warned wholesale and retail merchants to adhere strictly to the pricing and regulations for preparation and sales.

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